

Teaching Language in the Elementary School

FORTY-THIRD YEARBOOK, PART II

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THE FORTY-THIRD YEARBOOK

OF THE
NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY
OF EDUCATION

PART II TEACHING LANGUAGE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Prepared by the Society's Committee

M. R. TRABUE (*Chairman*), ANGELA BROENING, MILDRED A. DAWSON,
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AND DORA V. SMITH

Edited by
NELSON B. HENRY

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The formal proposal for the preparation of this yearbook was approved by the Board of Directors in June, 1941. The suggestion that a yearbook dealing with important problems of written and oral expression would be of service to teachers in the elementary schools was made by Dean Trabue in the autumn of 1940. A tentative outline of the proposed yearbook was reviewed by the Board at its meeting in February, 1941, Dean Trabue being present and participating in the discussion. The suggestions developed in the course of this discussion were embodied in the revised outline presented in June, at which time a committee for the preparation of the yearbook was appointed and Dean Trabue was requested to serve as chairman.

The chairman of the committee has accorded credit for the initial interest in promoting this type of publication to an active group of members of the National Conference on Research in English, mentioning particularly the concern and leadership of Dr. Seegers, who has contributed chapter iii of the present volume. Lacking the resources requisite to satisfactory prosecution of their plans, the group enlisted the aid of Dean Trabue. As a former member of the Board of Directors of this Society, he recognized the appropriateness of this addition to the series of yearbooks published by the Society in the fields of arithmetic, art, geography, music, reading, science, and the social studies. The further progress of the movement initiated by the group associated with Dr. Seegers is to be observed in the completed volume which the Society now presents as Part II of the Forty-third Yearbook.

In preparing this yearbook the committee has given first consideration to the language needs of children in the normal experiences of membership in family, school, and community groups. Accordingly, the role of the school in promoting language development is defined in terms of the understandings, skills, and attitudes which observably facilitate the individual's participation in various types of social situations, including both formal and informal group activities as well as both adult and peer associations. The results of recent research pertaining to the content and methods of instruction in written and oral expression are appropriately reflected in the formulation of an adequate language-arts program and in the discussion of significant issues on which further investigation may be required. The volume is presented with confidence that it will be a serviceable guide to teachers and supervisors in their efforts to stimulate growth in language power on the part of the children in the elementary schools.

NELSON B. HENRY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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The language one uses is probably the basis upon which his general culture and personality are judged more often than any other single index. What one says and his way of saying it are interpreted almost universally as indicative of the kind of person he is. No other subject taught in the schools has larger possibilities for building the reputation of the student as a "well-educated person" and thereby adding to the high repute of the school itself. It would seem reasonable to suppose, therefore, that all teachers and administrative school officers would attempt to give instruction in the language arts their most thoughtful care and attention.

I. CURRENT STATUS OF LANGUAGE-ARTS INSTRUCTION

While it has become quite popular to criticize the instruction offered by the public schools in almost every subject, there are valid evidences that the mass of boys and girls now in the schools are learning more arithmetic, history, spelling, and geography than did the much smaller number of children in the schools fifty or seventy-five years ago. Modern children are also learning to read more rapidly and more efficiently than did their grandparents. In spite of these improvements in the results of instruction, American children in most schools are failing to achieve the satisfactory standards in speaking and writing of which they are capable. Although there have been many improvements in the effectiveness and practical value of schoolroom procedures in the teaching of the language arts, too few teachers have yet developed the thorough understanding of the learning process that would lead them to adapt their instruction successfully to the individual interests, needs, and capacities of their pupils. In some schools the teaching done in the name of the language arts is actually producing attitudes and habits that prevent students, both immediately and in later life, from participating freely in discussions and

from writing useful records, reports, or even letters to their relatives and friends.

The disappointing results achieved by so many schools in teaching children to speak and to write their native language cannot be attributed to any single factor. Most teachers of English try conscientiously to bring about improvements in their pupils' use of language, but teachers of other subjects have not generally accepted any large share of responsibility for developing effective habits of speaking and writing. School administrators, following the pattern set by executives in great industrial mass-production plants, have insisted that each teacher be efficient in teaching her own subject and have too often failed to recognize that a teacher of science, of mathematics, or of some other subject, well qualified in her own field, can and sometimes does impair more good habits of English expression than the English teacher can possibly strengthen in the same pupils. The language heard by the pupil and found effective on the playground, in the home, and on the street has frequently become more firmly fixed in his habits than the language taught in the classroom. The courses of study provided by state departments of public instruction or by local boards of education, even when these have been developed by the co-operative efforts of teachers, supervisors, and other well-qualified educators, have in many cases been incomplete and much too general. They have often been lacking in clear suggestions as to how their carefully phrased objectives might be achieved with pupils of widely varying backgrounds and capacities. The textbooks adopted for use in the schools have usually been of such a nature that, except under the guidance of an unusually competent teacher, the pupils see little relation between the explanations, directions, and exercises in the book and their daily speaking and writing outside the language class.

Not all of the poor language used by pupils in school and out can be charged to the accounts of others than English teachers, however. Regardless of how religiously a teacher tries to correct the language errors of her pupils, her efforts in that direction are certain to produce little actual improvement unless they make use of the psychological principles that govern learning. And when a language teacher's efforts are in direct conflict with the conditions that promote learning, there is no hope of making any real progress, however great the amount of energy and time spent. A teacher of the language arts must not only know exactly what changes she wishes to bring about in each pupil, but she must also plan and guide the pupil's experiences in such a way that the psychological principles which facilitate learning will operate to strengthen the desired language habits in that pupil. Mere lesson assigning, recitation hearing,

project conducting, or activity supervision will not automatically produce effective language habits in pupils. Superficial teaching, based upon half-understood educational theories, is no more effective in developing good habits of speaking and writing than is routine drill in grammar and syntax. In order that he may be helped to develop effective speaking and writing habits, a pupil must be thoroughly understood by the teacher, and then very carefully and intelligently taught. Success in teaching the language arts does not depend upon mere good intentions and industrious activity. It is dependent upon these *plus* full understanding of the individual student, of the various factors which help to bring about learning, and of ways in which these factors can be effectively applied.

II. PURPOSES OF THIS YEARBOOK

The preparation of this yearbook was undertaken in the hope that it might provide teachers and school executives with sound and helpful materials for their guidance in developing more effective programs of instruction in the language arts, particularly in the elementary schools. The field of reading has been well presented in Part I of the Twenty-fourth Yearbook and in Part I of the Thirty-sixth Yearbook of this Society. Except in so far as reading influences expression, no effort has been made in this volume to go further in the treatment of reading, which is one of the most important of the language arts. Little attention has likewise been given in this volume to the important art of listening, except again as it bears directly upon expression. The committee has directed its efforts primarily toward the preparation of a volume that would help teachers to be more effective in teaching children to speak and to write well.

While the chapters which follow have been written with the elementary teacher and pupil in mind, the committee is convinced that most of the principles and suggestions offered here are applicable with minor adaptations to the teaching of older children and adults who have not yet acquired the habits and attitudes involved in effective speaking and writing. The grown man who has not learned to introduce a friend to a lady or to capitalize a proper noun can be taught to do so by the same kind of experiences as would have been effective when he was a boy in elementary school. The discussions and illustrations in this yearbook have been addressed to elementary-school teachers because the authors believe that a large proportion of the important language-arts skills can and should be taught in the first six grades and because the confinement of discussions to elementary-grade instruction gives them greater unity and clarity.

This yearbook committee is unanimous in its belief that efficient

skills in expressing one's self through language, including sensitiveness as to when to speak and to write, are extremely important factors in the development of a wholesome and mature personality. The individual who has learned to think beforehand about the effects he desires to produce by his use of words becomes more conscious than he otherwise would be of the effects actually produced by his expressions and is thereafter better able than before to use language effectively. This growth in power to use language as a means of influencing others increases one's self-confidence and social poise. The committee believes that the language-arts program, perhaps the entire instructional program of the public schools, finds its chief justification in these contributions to the development of mature personality and of the social skills, understandings, and attitudes needed in successful co-operative citizenship. The individual who is able to communicate effectively with his fellows gains their attention and respect, which in turn gives him greater confidence and poise. Because of these gains, he is able to think more clearly and constructively, thereby developing better ideas to be shared with his fellows. Effective instruction in the language arts thus becomes a major contribution to constructive citizenship in the school, the community, the state, the nation, and the world. Therefore, oral and written expression should not be considered merely as school subjects, for they are basic tools and materials in the construction of a more satisfactory social and political society as well as of a more effective and satisfying personal life.

Because they conceive of speaking and writing as so vitally important both to society and to the individual, the authors of the chapters which follow advocate the teaching of speaking and writing as means for carrying forward more effectively the social activities of living and learning in which the children are already interested or can readily be made interested. The question for the teacher is, "What does John want and need to do well, or what might he readily be led to want to do well that could be done better if he were able to express himself more effectively in language?" This is very different from asking, "What topic or assignment can I give to John that will enable me to get from him a speech or a composition which I can correct?"

Educational research has clearly indicated that a fact or a habit learned in one situation tends to be employed in a different situation if the learner recognizes in the second situation the "identical elements" that were present in the learning situation. In his life outside the language class the most important "element" in almost any "situation" in which an individual finds himself is a purpose, a desire to get something done, or a feeling of need. Unless the original classroom situation in

which he learned to make a given language response was also dominated by a similar purpose, desire, or need, it is extremely difficult for the individual to recognize in the current life situation those "identical elements" to which he learned a satisfactory response in school.

The boy playing shortstop, for example, may have learned yesterday in the language class to say, "I have it." The dominating feature of the learning situation, however, was not any strong desire or deep-felt need. When this young shortstop sees the second-baseman move toward him to catch a fly ball that is coming his way, and when he remembers that a certain girl is probably watching him from the grandstand, the teacher need not wonder that he shouts, "I got it!" Unless learning situations are dominated by just as vital student aims and purposes as are the situations outside the classroom in which it is appropriate to use the item learned, we need not expect any general recognition of "identical elements" in the two situations, nor much consequent "transfer of training."

This yearbook does not attempt to summarize the educational research that has been done in language-arts instruction, but it does attempt to make available to teachers the most helpful outcomes of such research and of successful classroom experience in teaching the expressional phases of the language arts. No attempt has been made here to provide the complete curricular details that would properly be expected in a course of study or a textbook. The authors have tried, however, to give a broad overview of the language-arts field, with reasonably full discussions of most of the controversial issues. It is hoped that both the content and method of an effective program of instruction in speaking and writing have been suggested in sufficient detail to be practically helpful.

CHAPTER II

AN ADEQUATE PROGRAM IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

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I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

In achieving his chosen purposes and carrying out his various enterprises, the child has two major uses for language. *First*, it is his chief means of communicating with others. He tries to convey his ideas and feelings to others by talking and by writing. He tries to arrive at a clear understanding of what others mean and what they feel by listening to them talk, by reading what they have written, and by reconsidering what they have said or written. *Second*, the thinking that the child does—his silent making and questioning of propositions in constructing an idea, in reaching a decision, in evaluating a proposed plan, or in solving a problem—is carried on for the most part in language. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the control of language which the child needs to build is that which he must have in order to communicate effectively with others and to think clearly and logically about his problems.

To help the child build this control of language, the school must provide intelligent instruction in a group of subjects or activities commonly called *the language arts*. These arts are composed of (1) *oral expression*, including the school subjects commonly known as composition, speech, dramatics, and grammar, (2) *written expression*, including the school subjects commonly known as composition, grammar, spelling, and handwriting, (3) *listening*, and (4) *reading*. Oral and written expression must be taught so that the pupil acquires the language ability he needs for conveying his ideas to others and for thinking about his problems. Listening and reading must be taught so that he can arrive at the meanings intended by speakers and writers and can think about those meanings in the light of his problems.

Previous yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education have presented detailed discussions of problems in the teaching of

reading.¹ Suggestions relative to an instructional program in listening, an activity in which the required mental processes probably are quite similar to those essential to reading, have been presented elsewhere.² The content of this chapter is limited, therefore, to a discussion of an adequate program in oral and written expression—those aspects of the language arts which must be taught so that the pupil can build the language ability which he needs for conveying his ideas to others effectively and for thinking clearly and logically about his problems. Since discussions of speech, spelling, grammar, and handwriting are presented in chapter viii, the present chapter gives no special consideration to those subjects.

II. THE PURPOSE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF INSTRUCTION IN ORAL AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Every day, in and out of school, the child meets situations in which he has worthy purposes for talking and writing. Stimulated by his experiences, by the experiences of others, by things he has done, seen, heard, or read, by things that have happened to him or to others, and by things that others say to him, the child has both the urge and the need to express his ideas—to make statements and to ask questions. He may wish, for example, to share with others one or more of his experiences, to give news or information to a friend who lives at a distance, to describe to his playmates a knife he has lost, to tell his classmates how to play a given game, or to make a point in a meeting of his club. He may want to ask questions in order to get a clear idea of a point under discussion by his class, his family, or his play group. To attempt to clarify or organize his ideas on a given topic, he may wish to write what he knows about that topic and then to think over what he has written. Frequently, of course, he needs to talk and write in order to convince an instructor that he has acquired an idea which has been presented to him.

The school should teach those aspects of oral and written expression which the pupil needs most in order to achieve his purposes and to carry out his enterprises. It should teach him that which he needs to know and do in order to talk and write well in the speaking and writing situations which he meets repeatedly, both in and out of school—at home, at a par-

¹ See (a) *Report of the National Committee on Reading*. Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, 1925; (b) *The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report*. Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education (5835 Kimbark Avenue), 1937.

² *Language Arts in the Elementary School*, pp. 141-42. Twentieth Yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals, Vol. XX, No. 6. Washington: National Education Association, 1941.

ty, on the street or the playground, in study, in the language class, in the social studies class, in the workshop, and elsewhere.

To achieve this end, the school's program in oral and written expression should be based upon the speaking and writing situations with which the pupil is confronted. Several surveys of such situations in life are available.³ An examination of these surveys, published and unpublished, shows the following list to be illustrative, but by no means exhaustive:

1. Tom and Sam are talking on Tom's front steps. Billy, a new friend of Tom's, but unknown to Sam, comes up to ask Tom a question. Tom needs to introduce Billy to Sam.
2. Mary is taking a test in social studies. She needs to write answers to questions to show that she has the ideas which the questions ask for.
3. Ann has lost her sweater at school. She wants the other boys and girls to help her find it. She needs to describe the sweater so that they will know it when they see it.
4. Betty is a member of a club. The club members are discussing ways of earning money. Betty has a good idea that she wants to express on the topic.
5. Dick has found a given book to be especially interesting and wants to acquaint his friends with it. He needs to tell them things about the book which will help them to decide whether they wish to read it.
6. Bob wants to make arrangements now to go to the football game with Fred who lives a half mile away. Bob needs to call Fred on the telephone.
7. Sally has returned from a trip to Yellowstone Park and wishes to share her experiences with her class. She is to prepare and give a report on her trip that will interest the class.
8. Peter is the secretary of the Camera Club. He needs to write the minutes of the meeting held yesterday.
9. Jim's class will give a program at school this week. The class has asked him to prepare an announcement to be sent to other classes and to parents.
10. Jack is preparing to take part in a discussion on a science topic. As he studies, he needs to take and organize notes on that topic.
11. Harry, one of Joe's friends, has moved to another town. The house in which Harry lived burned last week. One of Harry's friends, known to Joe, won a soap-box derby yesterday. Joe wants to write the news to Harry.
12. Dan and Frank want to find out how to make a box kite. Ted has made that kind of kite. When the boys asked him how to do the work and what materials were required, Ted needed to give directions for making the kite.

³ For a summary or a notation of most of the published surveys, see R. L. Lyman, *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language, and Composition*, chap. i. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 36. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1929; Paul McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, chap. i. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939 (revised).

13. Lou is going to give a surprise party for her friend, Carol. Lou needs to give invitations to several friends. Those who are invited need to reply to her invitation.
14. When Frank answers the doorbell, he finds a friend of his mother's. The friend wishes to talk with his mother. Frank needs to know what to say and do.
15. Ben and a few of his friends are talking about airplanes. They have ideas they wish to express on the topic. Each person in the group needs to know how to take part well in the conversation.
16. Sue is helping to entertain a group of persons. Stories are being told. Sue wants to take part. She needs to know how to choose a good story and how to tell it well.
17. Mark's uncle who lives in Wyoming has sent him a cowboy suit. Mark needs to thank him. His thanks must be offered by letter.
18. Terry is attending a party that Janet's mother is giving for Janet. It is time to leave, and Terry needs to express his appreciation to Janet's mother.
19. Jerry believes that Carter School should have a large radio in the auditorium, and he wants to do something about the matter. He decides that writing an editorial and printing it in the school paper might stimulate the boys and girls to find a way to get the radio. He needs to know how to write that editorial well.
20. Two of her friends ask Mary to tell them how she made a bookcase that she gave to her mother. Mary needs to be able to give that explanation so that her friends will know how to make bookcases like it.
21. Alice has been asked by her class to prepare and give a special report on travel by covered wagon. She knows an old settler who traveled a thousand miles in that way, and she wishes to get information from him to use in her report. She needs to know how to carry on an interview with the old settler in order to get some of the information she needs.
22. Sally was asked to tell the class what she had found out about the making of synthetic rubber. The ideas she had were not well organized, and some of them were not very clear to her. In order to clarify and to organize her ideas, Sally wrote, studied, and rewrote the information she had.
23. Today, Mary returned from a three-day vacation at Lake Glencoe. Now she needs to decide what topics to write about in her diary.
24. To give his class a clearer idea of the increase in the number of airplanes manufactured in recent years, Sam needs to make a graph to show the comparisons.

There are at least three good reasons why the pupil needs to learn to meet successfully the speaking and writing situations with which he is confronted. In the first place, lack of competence in speaking and writing greatly reduces the pupil's chances of success in communicating his ideas to others. For example, with lack of skill in speaking simply, clearly, and

exactly enough so that his listeners can understand what he means, his contributions in conversations and discussions tend to be negligible, both in and out of school. Others will not learn much by listening to him. Likewise, from the directions he may give for making something, his listener cannot find out what to do. It should be remembered also that, in testing, the teacher examines the pupil's language in order to decide whether he possesses a given idea and that it is possible for a pupil to have an idea without being able to express that idea clearly enough to convince the teacher that he has it. So long as testing is done by means of language, the school, in order to prevent failure and retardation, must teach the pupil the skills he needs in order to speak and write clearly and exactly enough so that the teacher can understand what he means.

An example of one type of incompetency in conveying ideas to others is not out of place here. Witness the following description written and placed on a bulletin board by a girl in the fourth grade:

My hat was lost in the school building today. It is light colored the brim turned up at one place and some decorations on it. There is a piece of cloth on it. Please bring the hat to Room 14.

MARY BROWN

Now think of answers to these questions: What color is the hat? Tan? Where is the brim turned up? In the back? What are those decorations? Flowers? Buttons? Are the decorations on the brim or on some other part of the hat? Is the piece of cloth a band? If you saw the hat would you be able to identify it? Could you distinguish it from other hats that might be mistaken for it? It may interest the reader to know that the hat was light blue, that the brim was turned up on the right side, that the decorations were five artificial flowers sewed to the right side of the brim, and that the piece of cloth was a yellow ribbon that hung from the back.

This pupil knew her hat well enough to pick it out from many other hats. Yet, her skill in selecting from among her stock of words those which said exactly what she meant and her skill in constructing sentences were so meager that she was unable to describe her hat so that her classmates could distinguish it from other hats. Lack of ability in oral expression blocked the achievement of her purpose—the purpose of giving others information which they needed in order to identify the lost hat.

A second reason why the pupil needs to learn to speak and write well lies in the fact that language is a tool for learning. Consider, for example, an idea to be taught to a pupil—such as how to borrow in subtraction, what an Eskimo igloo is like, what hibernation is, or what a social order is. If the teacher proceeds in the way in which most teaching is done, he will present the idea in language—either in material to be read by the pupil or in an oral explanation. But that reading matter or the instructional

talking of the teacher cannot *give* the pupil the idea. Those printed or spoken symbols are merely cues which the pupil can use in getting started on the task of constructing the idea for himself. This constructing is necessarily an active mental process which the pupil carries on by means of language, probably communicating with himself, recalling experiences verbally, establishing relationships verbally, and silently making tentative statements and checking them with questions. This building of a given idea, which the pupil must do in order to learn, is often a difficult task, and the language skill that he needs here is just as exacting and complex as that needed in communicating his ideas to others. The child's use of language is so essential and so extensive in all fields of learning that if he lacks skill in "talking or writing to himself" clearly and exactly, much teaching falls on deaf ears or blind eyes, and much attempted learning is doomed to failure.

There is a third reason why the pupil needs to learn to meet successfully speaking and writing situations of life. Repeated failure in meeting such situations fosters a feeling of insecurity and retards seriously a child's development of poise in dealing with other people. Such results are most likely to occur when he fails in those situations in which he is aware that his cultural or intellectual level is judged by his language performance.

Think, for example, of the effect that experiences such as the few listed below could have upon a given child:

1. Tom feels a need to introduce his aunt to a friend's father, but does not know what to say or how to proceed. He senses that the two persons are expecting him to introduce them. He tries and feels that he fails, or he does nothing.
2. Bill attends a party given by a friend's mother. When it is time to leave, he slips out quietly without thanking her. He lacks confidence in his ability to express his appreciation to her.
3. Ann makes a talk before a group. Later she overhears statements to the effect that her pronunciation of certain words indicated she had not received certain educational advantages.
4. Sue writes a letter of application for a job. Later she discovers that her misspelling of several words lost her the consideration she wanted.

Speaking and writing are done so commonly, and they are so closely tied to social relationships, that within the boundaries of their use lie innumerable possibilities for anyone to develop a feeling of self-respect or a feeling of insecurity. The best contribution that the teaching of speaking and writing can make to the development of the pupil's emotional stability is to provide him with the ability which he needs in order to meet speaking and writing situations successfully. That contribution is the offering which instruction in speaking and writing makes to the so-called personality development of the child.

III. SUGGESTED PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION IN ORAL AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION

1. Ten Important Activities To Be Taught

An examination of the speaking and writing situations with which he is confronted shows that, in order to carry out his worthy purposes and enterprises, the child must engage in certain speaking and writing activities. Consequently, the program of instruction in oral and written expression should teach the pupil to engage successfully in those important activities whenever and wherever they arise, in and out of school. With this purpose in mind it is suggested that the school provide definite instruction and practice in each of the ten important speaking and writing activities listed below.⁴ It is assumed that the teaching to be done will help the pupil to develop a feeling of responsibility for taking part in a given activity as well as to acquire the ability to take part in that activity.

1. *Taking part in conversation and discussion*, including (a) informal conversation in which there is no problem to be solved or decision to be reached, (b) discussion of a definite topic or question in which a problem is to be solved or a decision to be reached, (c) interviews, (d) the making of introductions.
2. *Using the telephone*, including (a) answering various types of calls, (b) making various types of calls, (c) talking and listening on the telephone.
3. *Taking part in meetings*, including (a) acting as chairman, taking part as a member of the group in a meeting of a club, class, or other organization, and writing the minutes of a meeting, (b) acting as a chairman, a performer, or a member of the audience in a school assembly.
4. *Giving reports*, oral and written, including (a) the report of a personal experience or an experience of another person, (b) the so-called special topic report, (c) the different types of talks and speeches.
5. *Telling and writing stories*, including (a) the joke or anecdote, (b) the story previously heard or read, (c) the story made of a personal experience or an experience of another person, (d) the imaginary story.
6. *Giving reviews*, oral and written, including reviews of books read, radio programs heard, and movies seen.
7. *Giving directions and explanations*, oral and written, including particularly (a) directions for getting to a certain place or for making something, (b) explanations of how something was done or made.
8. *Making announcements and notices*, oral and written, including (a) the oral announcement of a meeting to be held, or a party, exhibit, or program to be given, (b) written notices covering the same types of events.

⁴ The reader is free to state one or more of the ten activities in words other than those used in the list. No significance is attached to the order in which the activities are listed.

9. *Giving descriptions*, oral and written, including particularly the description of an object or a person to be identified by others.
10. *Writing letters*, including (a) friendly letters such as the informal note, the news letter, the letter of sympathy, the thank-you letter, the congratulatory letter, invitations, and replies, (b) business letters such as orders, requests for information or sample goods, applications.

2. Four Groups of Items To Be Taught

In order to take part successfully in these ten language activities, the pupil must develop and make use of certain definite abilities. Many of those abilities are common to all of the ten activities. Each of the ten activities requires some abilities that are peculiar to it. Some of the abilities may be called *understandings*; some others are *skills*; the remainder are *attitudes*. From the teacher's point of view, the various abilities may be thought of as *items to be taught*—to be taught just as definitely and carefully as certain understandings, skills, and attitudes in arithmetic need to be taught.

The items which need to be taught so that the pupil may build competence in engaging in any one of the ten speaking and writing activities may be classified into four large groups. These groups are:

- Group 1. *Those items essential to deciding what to say or write—to selecting ideas to be expressed*
- Group 2. *Those items essential to speaking and writing simply, clearly, and exactly enough so that others can understand what is meant*
- Group 3. *Those items essential to speaking and writing pleasantly and within the limits of the social amenities that should accompany communication with others*
- Group 4. *Those items essential to speaking and writing correctly as judged by the standards of good usage developed by the practices of cultured persons*

3. The Meaning and Importance of Each of the Four Groups of Items

Before presenting illustrative items in each of the four groups, one point should be made clear. There is no intimation in the discussion to follow that the pupil can become proficient in engaging in any one of the ten speaking and writing activities merely by learning the items that are essential to taking part in that activity. As will be shown in section v of this chapter, adequate instruction in conversation, story telling, letter writing, or any one of the ten activities requires much more than teaching the separate items essential to that activity.

Now—consider in more detail the meaning, the importance, and sample items illustrative of each of the four groups to be taught:

a) *Group 1. Those items essential to deciding what to say or write.* This group contains items that have to do with the child's problem of choosing the ideas which he should express in order to achieve his purpose, to give his listeners or readers pleasure, or to give them the information they need. Every pupil should learn: (1) that in the talking and the writing which he does in order to achieve his purpose, he should express not just any ideas, but, rather, those which will best bring about the achievement of that purpose; (2) that in all his speaking and writing to others, he must consider his listener or reader thoughtfully to the extent that he, the speaker or writer, expresses ideas which that listener or reader will like to hear about; and (3) that in most speaking and writing activities, such as in writing business letters, in introducing one person to another, in telling others about a book read, or in making an announcement, there are certain ideas that should be expressed in order to give the listener or reader information that he needs.

Lack of space does not permit giving here a list of all items included in group 1. The following, however, are particularly important, and are illustrative of those which need to be taught:

1. How to choose a topic for a report, and what to tell about that topic
2. What to tell about a book, a motion picture, or a radio program when introducing it to another person
3. What to say in greeting at the door a caller who has come to see another member of the family
4. What to tell or ask in a conversation in order to interest others in the group
5. What to say when introducing one person to another
6. What greetings and closings to use in different letters
7. What to tell about an article (or a person) in describing it so that another person can identify it when he sees it
8. What to write in a notice of a meeting, an invitation, and a reply to an invitation
9. What to write about in a news letter to a friend to make the letter interesting to him
10. What to write and what not to write about in a letter of sympathy or a letter of congratulation
11. What to say in making and answering telephone calls
12. How to choose a story to fit the audience and the occasion
13. How to choose a title and a beginning sentence for a story
14. What to tell in giving directions for getting to a certain place
15. What to write in the minutes of a meeting
16. What to say in a meeting conducted according to parliamentary procedure
17. What to say in a conversation in order to help others in the group to take part
18. What to write in a business letter so that the recipient can do what the writer wants him to do

19. What topics should be avoided in conversation under certain circumstances
20. What to write in a paragraph that is to be a summary of the idea given in several paragraphs

Many children talk and write without paying sufficient attention to their need for expressing ideas which will interest their listeners or readers, or which will give those persons the information they need. Boys and girls sometimes write news letters without answering questions which their correspondents have asked; and in writing business letters they may express ideas that are not needed by the recipient. They give descriptions of lost articles without telling the facts that could be most helpful in locating those articles. In conversations, they frequently are not thoughtful of the interests and needs of other members of the group. In giving directions, they leave out important steps which the listeners or readers must have in order to do what the directions are supposed to enable them to do. In introducing a book to a friend, they omit ideas which the listener needs in order to decide whether he wants to read that book. When giving reports, they omit ideas needed to make those reports interesting to the audience. They leave out important parts of stories which they try to tell, and they include nonessential matters. Yet, every child has a right and an obligation to become a speaker and a writer who expresses ideas which his listener or reader will want to hear about or which will give that listener the information he needs. To enable the child to realize that right and to discharge that obligation, the school's program in oral and written expression should provide for definite instruction in the items included in group 1. It is indeed unfortunate that so small a part of the time the school devotes to instruction in speaking and writing is spent in teaching those items.

b) *Group 2. Those items essential to speaking and writing simply, clearly, and exactly enough so that others can understand what is meant.* It seems reasonable to assume that when a child speaks or writes to another person, he expects his listener or reader to understand what he means, and that when the child tries to think, he should understand what he himself means by the words and the sentences with which he attempts that thinking. Yet, it is at these very points, representing the real functions of oral and written expression, that the child has his most serious difficulties. He has great trouble in speaking and writing simply, clearly, and exactly enough for his listeners or readers to understand adequately what he means. In addition, he frequently makes statements and asks questions which say things that he does not mean.

For a preliminary understanding of some of the difficulties which a speaker or a writer faces in conveying his meaning by speaking or by

writing, consider just a few of the problems which a writer must solve in conveying to his reader a meaning or an idea which can be expressed in not less than nor more than one sentence. Let us assume that the writer starts with his meaning clearly in mind.⁵ His first task is to choose from among his large stock of words those which seem to him to convey his meaning best.⁶ The words chosen should fit his meaning as exactly as possible and should be familiar to the reader as a symbol of that meaning. During the process of choosing, the writer arranges the chosen words so that they make what we may call the "thought form" of a sentence. If the writer is careless, or if his purpose does not demand careful writing, he writes the sentence immediately and lets it stand as it is. If he is thoughtful of the reader's limitations, or if his purpose demands careful writing, the writer thinks over the sentence in its thought form to decide whether it is simple, clear, and exact enough so that the reader can understand what is meant. If the sentence is not sufficiently simple, clear, and exact, the writer substitutes words that are more exact and more familiar to the reader, and, perhaps, rearranges the words so that the sentence has a structure that is familiar to the reader. Then the writer writes his sentence. Again he tests it to find out if it is sufficiently simple, clear, and exact, or to discover what possible misinterpretations the reader might make of it. If the sentence is not yet satisfactory, the writer again tries to improve it.⁷

A complete list of items included in group 2 cannot be given here. The following, however, are particularly important and are typical of those items that need to be taught:

1. Choosing and using words and groups of words that say exactly what is meant rather than words to each of which the listener or reader can legitimately attach any one of several meanings in the setting in which the word is used. For example, using *four* instead of *some* when *four* is meant, *in front of* instead of *near* when *in front of* is meant, *cotton gin* instead of *machinery* when *cotton gin* is meant, *black* instead of *dark colored* when *black* is meant

⁵ If the writer has become aware of the difficulty of making himself understood, he will have done or will have to do some thinking to clarify his meaning in his mind before he begins to write. Unfortunately, many people talk and write without knowing what they mean. Good instruction in language will teach the pupil that it is important to do needed thinking before talking or writing is done.

⁶ Usually a writer can make this choice after merely thinking over possibilities within his writing vocabulary. If there is a period of preparing for the writing, a dictionary may need to be consulted.

⁷ Obviously, this illustration refers to the making of a sentence. The making of a paragraph or several paragraphs increases tremendously the writer's problems—particularly problems pertaining to the organizing of ideas.

2. Choosing and using words with which the listener or reader is familiar as symbols of the meanings intended, rather than words which, although they are legitimate symbols of the meanings intended and familiar to the speaker or writer, are unfamiliar to the listener or reader
3. Changing the vocabulary of a statement obtained from a printed source or from an interview so that the meaning can be understood by one's audience or readers, without changing the meaning of that statement
4. Organizing words into a sentence so that the sentence says exactly what is meant
5. Understanding what a sentence is, when and why a sentence instead of a group of words that is not a sentence should be used, and proofreading or thinking over one's expression to find groups of words that are not sentences for which sentences should be substituted
6. Keeping sentences apart instead of running them together, and proofreading or thinking over one's expression to separate sentences that are run together
7. Identifying different types of sentences, such as declarative and interrogative, in one's expression so that the voice and punctuation can be used to indicate meaning intended
8. Telling enough about a topic to make one's meaning clear
9. Organizing ideas so that each paragraph keeps to its topic
10. Organizing ideas so that things are told in the order in which they happened or are to be done
11. Making each sentence in a paragraph say something that has not already been said in that paragraph
12. Understanding what a paragraph is and indicating the beginning of a paragraph
13. Organizing into paragraphs ideas that should be presented in more than one paragraph
14. Using a comma (*a*) to separate words or groups of words written in a series, (*b*) to set off an appositive, (*c*) to set off a parenthetical expression, (*d*) before the conjunction in a compound sentence, (*e*) to set off the name of a person addressed, (*f*) to set off a verbal or a subordinate clause at the beginning of a sentence, (*g*) to set off a quotation from the rest of a sentence, (*h*) to set off *No* or *Yes* when that word is used as the first word in a group of words that answers a question and the first word itself—*no* or *yes*—answers the question.
15. Using the period (*a*) at the end of a sentence that makes a statement or gives a command, (*b*) after the abbreviations which might cause confusion in meaning if the period were omitted, such as *Miss.*, *Ill.*, *in.*, *gal.*, *Sun.*, *Wash.*, *Sat.*, *do.*
16. Using an exclamation mark after an exclamation, and a question mark after a question
17. Using a semicolon between independent clauses in a compound sentence when those clauses are not connected by a simple co-ordinating conjunction
18. Using a colon (*a*) after the introduction to a list of items, (*b*) between the hours and minutes in a statement of time

19. Using the dictionary to find (a) the needed meaning of a word or group of words, (b) a word that may be used in the place of another word without changing the meaning too much
20. Writing legibly so that meaning is not confused, including (a) not running words together, (b) forming letters well, particularly *e, i, m, n, u, w, t, l, a, o, d, r, s*
21. Using the voice (a) in speaking loud enough for each listener to hear, (b) to aid in conveying the meaning intended
22. Explaining carefully, when asked courteously to do so, what was meant by an expression previously given
23. Using a pronoun only when the antecedent is clear
24. Understanding that speaking and writing are means of conveying one's ideas to others, and developing a desire to convey one's meaning simply, clearly, and exactly enough so that one's listeners or readers can understand what is meant
25. Including in a note taken during study enough to make that note subsequently useful

Available data show that many pupils and students at all educational levels are not particularly competent in making their meaning clear in speech and writing and that they have not come to look upon speaking and writing essentially as the means of communicating their ideas to others.⁸ For example, such a pupil is careless in using words exactly. He also fails to give enough detail to make his meaning clear. He omits the use of a comma at a point where it is an important indicator of his meaning, and he arranges the parts of a sentence so that it says something that he does not mean. He fails to organize the ideas he presents in the form of a paragraph so that the meaning intended by that paragraph is clear. Furthermore, he lacks the concern which he should have about making his meaning clear to others. This negative attitude finds so much fertile soil in which to grow in our schools that many students, by the time they reach college, are both willing and able to write sentences in examinations, reports, and term papers, dealing with their courses, without knowing what those sentences mean. This practice, of course, is an advanced stage of verbalism employed by people who have never learned to look for the meaning that lies behind a given spoken or written expression.

There is good reason to believe that at all educational levels the school should spend more time than it does in skilfully teaching pupils how to talk and write simply, clearly, and exactly enough so that others can understand what is meant. It should be continuously kept in mind that in all speaking and writing to others, it is *meaning* that counts most. When

⁸ Paul McKee, *Studies of Difficulties in Speaking and Writing Clearly*. Unpublished manuscript. Greeley, Colorado: State College of Education.

anyone speaks or writes to convey his idea to others, it makes little difference how attractive the voice or the handwriting is if the speaking or writing is so vague that the listener or reader cannot understand what is meant. No pupil can learn to center his efforts upon conveying his meaning, however, without the stimulation that comes from others who courteously insist upon understanding what he means. Any pupil who discovers by questions from others how difficult it is to make his meaning clear, and how easy it is to say or write what he does not mean, has taken a first step in gaining the control of oral and written expression that he needs in order to convey his ideas to others.

c) *Group 3. Those items essential to speaking and writing pleasantly and within the limits of the social amenities that should accompany communication with others.* This group includes items which, if learned, enable the pupil to express his ideas in a manner that is pleasant to his listener or reader, and which show consideration for the rights and feelings of that listener or reader. The following list of items to be taught is illustrative, but not complete:

1. Speaking with a voice that is pleasant to the listener
2. Using a variety of words in expression rather than overusing some words
3. Varying sentence length rather than overusing short, choppy sentences
4. Using variety in sentence structure rather than overusing one type, such as the type in which the subject appears at the beginning of the sentence
5. Giving others a chance to talk in conversation
6. Listening in conversation to hear the interesting and important things that others say
7. Understanding when and where a conversation should not be carried on
8. Avoiding the making of telephone calls at times that are inconvenient for others
9. Making a person feel welcome when he joins a conversation group late
10. Disagreeing courteously with another person's statement
11. Doing what should be done when you and another person begin to talk at the same time
12. Answering letters promptly
13. Making a correspondent feel that a friendly letter written to him is meant for him rather than for just anyone
14. Avoiding harmful gossip in conversation
15. Refraining from interrupting one who is talking unless such interruption is necessary
16. Changing the topic of conversation in order to avoid embarrassment or boredom of persons in the group
17. Inquiring about matters of concern to one's listener or reader without asking questions that are too personal
18. Avoiding futile argument

In some schools there is a dearth of instruction in the pleasantries and social amenities which are fundamental in courteous speaking and writing. Indeed, one can find in schools situations which eliminate even an opportunity to practice certain amenities. For example, the custom of raising hands in conversations or discussions does not permit the pupil to learn such an amenity as proceeding courteously when he and another person begin to talk at the same time. Yet, it seems reasonable to say that the school's program in oral and written expression should provide instruction which seeks to help the pupil to become a pleasant and courteous speaker and writer. After all, the child's pleasantness and courtesy in speaking and writing have a great deal to do with making others willing and eager to communicate with him.

d) *Group 4. Those items essential to speaking and writing correctly.* The practices of cultivated persons in speaking and writing have established certain standards of correctness in expression. Some of the present-day standards are debatable, and many of them may shift according to locality and time. Nevertheless, definite items remain to be taught. The following are illustrative:

1. Developing a desire to speak and write correctly
2. Using words correctly, including, as found by research, the common errors to which a social penalty is attached, such as *saw—seen, did—done, went—gone, ain't, was—were, negatives, sit—sat—set, John he, I—me.*
3. Pronouncing words correctly, particularly (a) sounding in certain words the endings *ing, t, d, and ow*, (b) sounding correctly the vowels in certain words such as *can, just, get, for*, (c) *th* and *wh*, (d) sounding all parts of certain words, such as *history, library*, (e) sounding clearly and correctly the ending of the first word and the beginning of the second word in certain pairs of words, such as *let me, want to, don't you*, (f) omitting unneeded sounds in certain words such as *oncet, athalete*, (g) placing accent correctly
4. Using capital letters where they should be used, and not using them where they are not needed, including (a) the first word of a sentence, a quotation, and a line of poetry, (b) the first and each important word in the name of a state, a city, a county, a religion, a biblical term, a term referring to God or Jesus, a company, a famous document or event, a special product, a club or other organization, the title of a book, story, poem, or song, (c) the name of a day of the week, a special day, a month, (d) the initials and title of a person, (e) omitting capital letters for names of school subjects except those subjects whose names are the same as the names of nationalities, for such words as *doctor* when not used as titles, and for terms such as *east, north, and southwest* when used to denote direction
5. Using a comma (a) after the greeting in a friendly letter, (b) after the closing in any letter, (c) between the number of the day and the number of the year in a date, (d) between the name of a city and the name of a state

6. Using a period after (a) an initial, (b) an abbreviation, (c) numbers in a list, (d) letters and numbers in an outline form
7. Using a colon after the salutation in a business letter
8. Spelling words correctly
9. Writing legibly with sufficient speed
10. Using correct manuscript form, including (a) placing and spacing the parts of a letter, (b) spacing and placing types of writing
11. Placing and spacing correctly the main address and return address on an envelope
12. Using a dictionary to find (a) the spelling of a word, (b) the pronunciation of a word
13. Using correct bibliographical form, including (a) the making of a book list, (b) correct form for titles of books and stories, (c) correct form for page or chapter references

It is quite probable that in many schools definite instruction in language is limited too exclusively to the teaching of items included in group 4. This practice is understandable because the need for such instruction is obvious. Furthermore, such items are concrete and teachable. They can be checked easily. In addition, many people tend to use an individual's efficiency in speaking and writing correctly as a measure of his cultural level and of his intellectual efficiency, judging him particularly by his correct usage of words, his pronunciation, and his spelling. This condition makes the teacher attach great importance to correctness in speech and writing and minimize the importance of other matters.

No one doubts the importance of learning to speak and write correctly. One must remember, however, that speaking and writing well involves much more than speaking and writing correctly. The pupil must learn also to tell and write interesting things, to say or write what needs to be said, to make his meaning clear, and to talk and write within the limits of pleasantness and of courtesy to one's listeners and readers. Consequently, it is important to teach items included in groups 1, 2, and 3—items that are just as concrete and teachable for the teacher who becomes acquainted with them as are the items included in group 4.

4. An Explanatory Note

A suggested program of instruction in oral and written expression has been offered in section iii of this chapter. That program consists of ten important speaking and writing activities in which the pupil must engage in order to carry out many of his worthy purposes and enterprises and of four groups of items which must be taught so that the pupil can learn to engage in the ten activities successfully.

In presenting the program no special attention was given to certain important aspects of oral and written expression which are handled as distinct subjects in many schools—namely, spelling, speech, handwriting, and grammar. The words to be taught in spelling are those which the child most needs in the writing that he does and should do in and out of school. The teaching of speech should emphasize the development of a voice that is pleasant and that can be heard by the child's listeners, the use of the voice to help show the meaning intended, and the correct pronunciation of important words that cause him difficulty. Instruction in handwriting should help the child to learn to write legibly with reasonable speed, and particular attention should be paid to the making of those letters and groups of letters that are most difficult to make readable. The teaching of grammar should center upon those matters which relate to the uses of words as parts of speech and to those elements of sentence structure which most aid the pupil in constructing clear sentences and in understanding why his errors are errors. Details relative to the programs in spelling, speech, handwriting, and grammar are discussed in chapter viii.

Every school's program in language should be complete. Ideally, that program should provide for instruction in all of the ten language activities. In addition, the teaching of a given activity should cover all rather than just a few of the different types of speaking or writing involved in that activity. For example, the program in letter writing should cover the writing of business letters, thank-you letters, letters of sympathy, congratulatory letters, and invitations and replies, as well as friendly news letters. Finally, the instruction provided in any given language activity should include the teaching of items in all four groups rather than just items in the fourth or any other one group.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF SEQUENCE OR GRADE PLACEMENT

When should the first teaching of a given speaking or writing activity or a given item be done? When or at what subsequent grade levels, if at any, should the teaching of a given activity or an item be continued? These are problems which must be answered in order to determine adequate sequence or grade placement of instruction in oral and written expression.

The basic criterion for determining the time to teach or the grade placement of a given speaking or writing activity or of a given item is the pupil's need for that activity or that item. Theoretically, the first teaching of a given speaking or writing activity should be done when or at that grade level in which the pupil normally begins to engage in that activity.

The first teaching of a given item should be done when the pupil begins to need that item in his speech or his writing; and this instruction should be continued in subsequent grades or be repeated from time to time, as the needs of the pupil may require. Such timing of instruction should help to give meaning and purpose to the learning to be done.

The use of this criterion—the pupil's need—is fairly effective in a few aspects of oral and written expression, particularly in spelling. Since the need for spelling arises relatively late—perhaps at the second-grade level—and expands gradually as the child's writing vocabulary develops, it is possible to place fairly well the teaching of the spelling of words grade by grade as the need for those words arises in the writing which the child does in and out of school. It is also possible to provide additional instruction on those words as needed in subsequent grades.⁹

In many other aspects of oral and written expression, however, it is more difficult to use this criterion in determining the grade level at which the first teaching of a given speaking or writing activity or of an item should be done. Here the pupil needs many things at once.¹⁰ For example, the child entering the first grade has been and is taking part in conversations, giving brief oral reports about his personal experiences, trying to retell stories he has heard, trying to describe orally objects and persons, answering telephone calls, and trying to explain orally how he made something. In carrying on these activities, he has needed and now needs control of many of the items in all four groups listed on pages 13–21, including, among other things, correct usage of words, correct pronunciation, a number of social amenities, sentence sense and sentence structure, and the use of pronouns. Obviously, there is not sufficient time in the first grade to give instruction in all these needs. Which ones should be introduced there?

By the time the pupil reaches the third grade, the situation has become still more complex. He begins to take part in the additional oral activities and also engages in most of the written expression activities. Here the pupil is confronted at once with a host of additional needs, including, for example, most elements of punctuation, capitalization, letter

⁹ For a more detailed consideration of the grade placement of spelling, see chap. viii.

¹⁰ Studies of the speech and writing of children in the primary grades show that the child's speaking and writing needs are complex and multiple. Summaries or notations of many of the published studies may be found in (a) Lyman, *op. cit.*, chaps. iii–iv; (b) appropriate issues of *Review of Educational Research*. Washington: American Educational Research Association; (c) McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, *op. cit.*, chap. v.

form, and the construction of a paragraph. To add to the difficulty, third-grade pupils' needs in such matters as correct usage of words, punctuation, and capitalization, as judged by results of studies of children's speech and writing, cover almost the entire list of items that are to be taught in the school. Pupils at the third-grade level probably misuse many of the words which make up the school's entire program in correct usage of words. They mispronounce many of the common words which make up the program in pronunciation. They need nearly all the uses of the period and many of the uses of the comma. They need all that anybody needs relative to the form of a friendly news letter. Obviously, no third-grade teacher can carry well an instructional load of this magnitude in the time available for the teaching of speaking and writing, and no third-grade pupil can succeed with a learning task of such scope. This means that the first teaching of some needs must be delayed.

In view of this situation and the lack of objective data relative to the grade placement of instruction in speaking and writing, the following tentative suggestions are offered.¹¹

1. Begin the teaching of each of the ten speaking and writing activities at the grade level in which pupils normally begin to engage in that activity. If the resulting instructional load is too heavy, eliminate from the program for that grade those activities in which the pupils engage least frequently and in which instruction is least needed. An activity so eliminated will be introduced in one or another of the later grades. The fact that instruction in a given activity is begun at a given grade level does not mean that all items involved in that activity are to be taught in that grade.
2. In the grade in which the first teaching of an activity is done, teach only those items which pupils need most and which they can understand. This will require the postponement of the teaching of other items or needs to subsequent grade levels.
3. Continue the teaching of each activity in each subsequent grade in which instruction is needed.
4. In each subsequent grade, review, as necessary, the items taught in the previous grade,¹² and begin the teaching of additional items. The items to be in-

¹¹ There is a great lack of objective data relative to the child's need for items at any given age or grade level. Summaries or notations of most published studies may be found in (a) Lyman, *op. cit.*, chaps. iii-iv; (b) McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, *op. cit.*, chaps. v, vii.

¹² Numerous studies have shown high persistency of errors in speaking and writing through the elementary school and the secondary school, and into college. Summaries or notations of such studies may be found in (a) Lyman, *op. cit.*, chaps. iii-iv; (b) McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, *op. cit.*, chap. v.

troduced and those to be reviewed at each grade level should be those most needed by pupils in that grade. The possibility that a given item was supposed to be taught below that grade level is not important.

An example of possible grade placement of a given speaking and writing activity through the first six grades in School A is not out of place here. Let us assume that the teaching of conversation in that school is begun in the first grade. In the light of the needs of first-grade children, a large number of items could be taught in that grade. Because such an instruction load cannot be carried, however, the teaching staff in School A, as it considers the entire program in conversation, must use its critical judgment in deciding just what items shall make up the first-grade offering in conversation. The use of this judgment may lead to the decision to have that offering include only the six following items:¹³

1. Taking part in conversation by telling things and by asking questions
2. Telling things that others in the group will like to hear
3. Giving others a chance to talk—not talking too often or too long at a time
4. Using certain words correctly
5. Pronouncing certain words correctly
6. Using words that say exactly what is meant

In the second grade and each subsequent grade in School A, these same six items are to be reviewed if need for such review exists. In addition, other items are to be introduced at each grade level. Thus, the teaching of conversation in School A is continuous through the six grades, with “old” items being reviewed if necessary and “new” items being introduced at each grade level.

Notice item “4” in the list given above—correct usage of certain words. What words? According to the studies of children’s errors in using words,¹⁴ about fifty common errors occur in the speech and writing of third-grade children. If School A tries to meet all these needs of its third-grade pupils, it will attempt to teach the correct use of at least one hundred words. The fact that such a load cannot be carried in the third grade means that the teaching staff must again use its critical judgment

¹³ In general, it is better at any grade level to teach and to provide enough of the right kind of practice on a small number of items than to merely present a larger number of items.

¹⁴ For summaries or notations of most of these studies, see (a) Lyman, *op. cit.*, chap. ii; (b) *Third Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence*, chap. viii. Washington: National Education Association, 1925; (c) appropriate issues of *Review of Educational Research*, *op. cit.*; (d) Henry Harap, “The Most Common Grammatical Errors,” *English Journal*, XIX (June, 1930), 440–46.

in spreading the task through the six grades.¹⁵ The use of that judgment might lead to the following decisions:

1. At a given grade level, teach the correct use of those words which pupils in that grade need most frequently and which have not already been learned.
2. At a given grade level, teach only the correct usage which can be understood by pupils in that grade. For example, it is quite possible that the distinction between the words *lie* and *lay* is too subtle to be understood by third-grade children. The teaching of the correct use of those words, even though it represents a need of third-grade pupils, may be delayed until a later grade.
3. Teach as early as possible those words in which errors are severely penalized. For example, using *done* when *did* should be used is more severely penalized than is using *can* when *may* should be used. This misuse of *done* is more often taken by one's listeners or readers as an indication of low cultural or educational level than is the misuse of *can* or *may*.
4. At a given grade level, review the correct use of words taught in an earlier grade if such review is needed. The possibility that such words were supposed to be taught below that grade level is inconsequential.

V. GENERAL PROPOSITIONS RELATIVE TO THE SUGGESTED PROGRAM

1. Child Growth and Instruction in Oral and Written Expression

The program in oral and written expression should utilize the known facts of child development that are pertinent to the problems inherent in the teaching of speaking and writing. Instruction in spelling, handwriting, composition, speech, and grammar should fit the present interests, needs, experiences, and abilities of the pupils to be taught.

This proposition has several general implications. Among these are: *First*, instruction in speaking and writing should make use of the interests of the pupil in the sense that the topics he talks and writes about in learning to talk and write well are topics for which he has considerable concern, both in and out of school. *Second*, the child's interests and needs should be used as sources of motivation in the learning of a given speaking or writing activity or of a given item. *Third*, a given speaking or writing activity should be introduced at a time when the pupil has need for engaging in that activity, and the teaching of that activity should be continued as long as items essential to engaging successfully in the activity remain to be learned. *Fourth*, the teaching of a given speaking and writing item

¹⁵ This problem must be faced also in dealing with other items involved in conversation, such as correct pronunciation of words, sentence sense, and sentence structure.

should be introduced at a time when the pupil has the experience and the intellectual background with which to understand and learn that item. *Fifth*, the need for good speaking and writing in all school situations should be recognized, and appropriate needed instruction should be given in those situations, whenever and wherever they occur. Detailed discussion of the ways in which teachers can use the known facts of child development in teaching oral and written expression are presented in chapter iv.

2. A Crucial Problem

Throughout this volume emphasis is placed upon the idea that the program in oral and written expression should teach the speaking and the writing which the child needs in order to achieve his own purposes and to carry out his own enterprises. No one has a serious quarrel with a realistic interpretation of this fundamental point of view. It must be remembered, however, that many children do not have some of the worthy purposes to which speaking and writing is essential. This means that a very important task of the school is to create an environment for the pupil which will stimulate him to acquire many and varied worthy purposes and to undertake numerous creditable enterprises, to the achievement of which speaking and writing are essential.

For example, there is ample evidence to show that many children do not have sufficient feeling of responsibility for taking part in speaking and writing activities. Here are a few illustrations of this negative attitude:

1. Lack of a feeling of responsibility for answering letters received and for writing letters which one should write as a matter of good taste, in order to get needed information or to show consideration for others
2. Lack of a feeling of responsibility for taking part in a discussion being held by a group of which one is a member
3. Lack of a feeling of responsibility for introducing one person to another when the occasion arises
4. Lack of a feeling of responsibility for preparing and giving a report of information needed by others
5. Lack of a feeling of responsibility for telling a story when a story needs to be told to entertain others or to relieve an unfavorable situation

Illustration 2 in the brief list given above is particularly important. Any teacher knows that the voluntary contributions usually made in a class discussion come from only a small percentage of the members of the class. The same situation exists in the so-called open forum discussions held by the adult citizens in a given community. Do most of the members of such a group feel that the topic of the discussion is not worth talking about? Do they have no ideas to contribute? Are they afraid their

ideas might be ridiculed? Do they feel that they do not have the skill with which to express themselves well? Has the teacher or the leader consciously or unconsciously given them the impression that they should not talk? If the class discussion is to be a teaching tool rather than a testing device, if the open forum discussion is to function as a means of enlightening the citizenry, all the members of the group must take part in discussions by telling important things and by asking good questions. To gain this end, each member needs to develop the feeling of responsibility for taking part. With objective answers to the questions given in this paragraph, the school could begin to decide what to do to help the pupil to want to take part and to stimulate a feeling of responsibility for doing so.

Obviously, the school should create conditions which stimulate pupils to acquire worthy purposes to which a feeling of responsibility for speaking and writing is essential. For example, in some way or other, purposes should be developed which encourage the pupil to exercise his responsibility for writing letters. In a given class every situation that arises in which a letter should be written needs to be utilized for writing letters. The utilization of the need to thank someone for a gift received or a favor done, to send news to a classmate who has moved away, to cheer a friend who is ill, or to congratulate a friend who has done something well should help to give pupils a sensitivity to situations in which a letter should be written. It should be remembered, too, that one good way to encourage the pupil to adopt worthy purposes that involve speaking and writing is to teach him speaking and writing skills which he can use in achieving those purposes.

3. Oral Expression Is Basic

As everyone knows, the child composes his ideas and expresses them in speech years before he begins to express them in writing. The thinking he does in order to compose his ideas for speech is largely the same as that which he must do later when he composes in writing. If he learns to do this thinking and composing well during the early years, his later progress in learning to express his ideas well in writing is considerably enhanced. The new tasks that he faces as he begins to write are largely mechanical matters such as spelling, handwriting, letter form, capitalization, the indenting of paragraphs, and the correct placement of punctuation marks to help to indicate his thinking. In this connection, it is well to remember also that most of the child's difficulties in language have their origin in and are perpetuated by speech rather than by writing and that errors made in his oral expression are easily transferred to his written expression.

All this means that instruction in oral expression is basic to instruction in written expression at all grade levels, that sound teaching of oral expression will lighten the instructional load in written expression, and that most of the practice to be provided in expression should be oral rather than written. It means also that *definite* teaching of oral expression may well begin in the kindergarten. This early beginning of definite and skilful teaching of oral expression may help to prevent the birth of many errors, to remove others before they have the opportunity to become fixed through practice, and to promote desirable growth in oral expression that will serve as a sound foundation for later instruction in written expression. The early instruction provided in oral expression, however, must do much more than merely offer boys and girls stimulation and opportunity to talk.

4. Definite Teaching Is Essential in Both Oral and Written Expression

In some schools there is too much tendency to try to teach oral and written expression merely by giving pupils stimulation, time, and opportunity to talk and write. In the language periods pupils are led to carry on conversations, to tell stories, or to give descriptions, without being taught what they need to know and do in order to engage in those activities successfully. For example, there is often no definite teaching, although there may be mentioning, of important items such as (a) helping others to take part in conversation, (b) telling the events of a story in the order in which they happened, and (c) telling ways in which an object is different from other objects which might be mistaken for it. In social studies, science, and other school work, pupils are frequently given stimulation and time to prepare and give reports and to write letters, without being taught procedures which they need to learn in order to prepare good reports and to write good letters. There is no definite teaching, for example, of important items such as (a) organizing notes into paragraphs, and (b) telling in a business letter all that one's correspondent needs to know in order to do what is expected of him. In connection with school parties, programs, and exhibits, pupils are asked to make announcements and to write invitations, without being taught what should be said in an announcement or in an invitation. Not only are pupils not taught what they need in order to take part in speaking and writing activities successfully, but they very rarely have an opportunity to evaluate their performance in those activities so that they can discover what they need to do to improve their speaking and writing.

Such practices make no real provision for the development of speaking

and writing ability. They do not constitute the *teaching* of oral and written expression but merely provide stimulation, time, and opportunity for a pupil to talk and write poorly or well, as the case may be, within the limits of the degree of control of language which he has gained up to that time. It is no wonder, under such circumstances, that pupils in a given class speak and write with little or no more effectiveness in June than they did in September.

Adequate instruction in any given one of the ten speaking and writing activities will provide for definite teaching of each item essential to that activity. This teaching of a given item will necessarily require a clear explanation of what the item is and how to use it well. Often it will include class discussion of the item in order to help pupils to clarify or to clinch the explanation given. It may well involve practice in using the item, as a means of providing action as well as talk, and to enable both the pupil and the teacher to discover whether the item has been at least partially learned. This teaching, of course, will take time. Whether that time is a language period in the daily program or part of the time devoted to social studies or other school work is not important. Whether the teaching and learning which consumes the time is called an activity or a lesson is inconsequential. The important thing is that the teaching be done and be done well.¹⁶

But the task of helping pupils learn to take part well in a given speaking and writing activity is much more than merely teaching the *items* involved in that activity. No pupil learns to be a good conversationalist or a writer of good letters, for example, merely by being given instruction in the items involved in conversation or in letter writing. Pupils must have also ample opportunity to *engage in the total activity*. In the light of their needs and purposes, they must have opportunities in school to carry on conversations, to write letters, and to take part in each of the other speaking and writing activities. It is important, too, that the pupils set standards for carrying on each of those activities and that they have opportunity to judge their performances in that activity by means of these standards. Such self-evaluation by a class is essential to pupils' discovery of what they need to do in order to make their next performance more effective and profitable than the preceding one.

The foregoing statements in no way deny the important relationship that does or should exist between instruction in speaking and writing and the teaching of social studies, science, and all other school subjects. All the speaking and writing items which the pupil needs in order to succeed

¹⁶ Types of possible organization for the program in language are discussed in chapter vi.

in other school work should be an important part of the program in oral and written expression.¹⁷ Those items may best be taught at the time they are needed in doing that work. Each speaking and writing activity should be carried on when good teaching of other school work requires the use of that activity.¹⁸ The work done by pupils in all school subjects should be so well motivated that many of the topics which pupils choose to talk and write about when learning to talk and write well are topics that are already being dealt with in those subjects. Each pupil should develop a feeling of responsibility for maintaining standards of effective speaking and writing in all his school work. It should be clear, however, that it is not necessary for a pupil to turn to his school work in order to find topics to talk or write about and that no statement in this paragraph is intended to support the idea that the teaching of speaking and writing can or should depend upon the incidental instruction that is possible in connection with other school work.

5. Topics To Talk or Write About

In the practicing that the pupil does in school in order to learn to engage successfully in the ten speaking and writing activities, what topics should he talk or write about? Should they represent his interests and experiences, in and out of school, about which he wants or needs to talk or write and about which he thinks others will like to hear? Should they represent only his interesting personal, concrete experiences? Should they be limited to interesting topics with which he is dealing in social studies, science, and other school work?

It is difficult for anyone to learn to talk and write clearly and exactly enough so that others can understand what he means—just as difficult as learning to read well. It is quite probable, however, that it is relatively easy for the pupil to learn to express his ideas clearly and exactly and to

¹⁷ The teachers in a given school would do well to become thoroughly acquainted with the speaking and writing items which the child must use in doing his school work and to teach those items well. This, however, is no intimation that the program in oral and written expression should be limited to those items. As social studies, science, and other school work is carried out in many schools, there are not yet in those schools many of the demands for language with which the pupils are confronted outside of the school.

¹⁸ For example, there is good reason to believe that the right kind of class discussion, involving the pupils' use of penetrating questions, clear explanation, and the attitude of demanding definite meaning, is profitable in helping pupils to clarify the vague ideas which they build in reading social studies and science textbooks. It is important to remember, however, that if pupils are to use a discussion for such a purpose, they must have learned to do the things they need to do to make the discussion profitable.

develop needed concern about expressing himself with such effectiveness, when the topics he talks or writes about are thoroughly familiar and concrete and are topics with which he wants or needs to deal. These two learning tasks are relatively difficult for the pupil when the topics he uses are unfamiliar and vague to him and when they are matters with which he has no desire or need to deal. For these reasons, when speaking and writing activities are being taught, particularly in the primary grades, children should talk or write about topics which represent their interests and personal experiences, wherever they may have arisen, and the interesting experiences of others. This means, for example, that most of the reports given by third-grade children should be about interesting things they have done, seen, or heard, or about interesting things that have happened to others. Familiarity with and interest in content are just as important in the early stages of instruction in speaking and writing as they are in the early stages of instruction in reading.

It is understood, of course, that pupils should not limit their talking or writing to topics pertaining to their experiences or the experiences of others. For example, if a pupil has become interested in and has some ideas on how the natives make boats in some of the Pacific islands, there is no reason why he should not write and talk about that topic in learning to prepare and give a report well. Such writing and talking about topics which interest the pupil and which he is studying in social studies, science, and other school subjects, if done in the light of language items that have been taught, and if *reconsidered and improved for clearness of meaning*, can help the pupil to clarify and organize the ideas with which he is dealing in those fields.

The foregoing paragraph in no way implies that the teacher must turn to other school work in order to find topics for pupils to talk or write about while learning to take part well in the ten speaking and writing activities. From his experiences in and out of school and from the experiences of others, the child has acquired more ideas than he can talk or write about in the time available for instruction in language. It is not necessary for the teacher to supply content for pupils to talk and write about; her task is to stimulate the pupils to want to talk and write about the ideas they have and to teach them how to express those ideas well.

6. Teaching Correct Ideas

Many of the speaking and writing items to be taught are difficult to explain so that the pupil does not get false ideas. For this reason the teacher must use great care in deciding what to teach about a given item. The following suggestions, illustrative of errors often found in courses of study, show the need for this care:

1. Do not tell pupils that the word *seen* or the word *written* always is or should be used with a helping word such as *has*, *have*, or *had*. Either of those two words, as is the case with the same form of many verbs, can be used correctly as a verb or as an adjective without a helping word. It is correct to say that *seen* or *written* is used correctly with a helping word.
2. Do not tell pupils that two negatives should not be used in one or the same sentence. In each of the correct sentences, *No, I can't go* and *I didn't tell him that I wouldn't be there*, two negatives are used.
3. Do not tell pupils that the title of a composition should have no end punctuation. A title that is an exclamation should have an exclamation mark after it. A title that is a question should have a question mark after it. It is correct to say that a period should not be placed after the title of a composition.
4. Do not teach pupils that a word which names a person, place, or thing is a noun. The word *ship* may or may not be a noun, depending upon the meaning with which it is used. It is correct to say that a word is a noun when it is used to name a person, place, or thing.
5. Do not teach pupils that a paragraph must have a topic sentence or that the topic sentence must be the first sentence in the paragraph. Many good paragraphs written by first-class writers do not have topic sentences. In a paragraph that has a topic sentence, that sentence may not be the first sentence.
6. Do not teach pupils that a group of words which is not a sentence is an incomplete sentence. There is no such thing as an incomplete sentence. A group of words is either a sentence or not a sentence. The words *complete* and *incomplete* when used in referring to sentences merely add confusion to an idea that is already difficult for the pupil to acquire.

7. The Need for Remedial Instruction

Before he enters school, the child has taken part in speaking activities and has listened to others talk. He has learned to meet these situations as he has seen and heard other people meet them and to speak the language that he has heard most frequently on the street, on the playground, and at home. Hence many pupils enter school with innumerable speaking disabilities. For example, they practice discourtesies in conversation. They do not keep to the topic in their brief explanations, and they tell things in an order in which they did not happen. They mispronounce common words, and they use words incorrectly. Frequently, they express their ideas too vaguely to be understood.

To make matters worse, these errors are fostered in some schools by two years of continued practice until, in the third grade, definite teaching of speaking and writing is initiated. At later educational levels these disabilities are fostered further by failure to pay enough attention to speaking and writing in other school work. This is one reason why the teaching of speaking and writing is at least as difficult as the teaching of arithmetic. Many pupils enter the first or second grade having learned to use

run when they should use *ran*, or to pronounce *get* as *git* and *such* as *sich* or *sech*. Few pupils enter those grades having learned as thoroughly that 3 plus 4 are 6 or that 9 minus 4 are 3. Consequently, the teacher of speaking and writing must not only teach what the correct responses are; she must also assist in eliminating the incorrect responses.

It is quite possible that doing the first of these tasks well does not automatically get the second task done. Perhaps explaining to the pupil who says *I seen* that *I have seen* and *I saw* are correct does not make him aware of the fact that he is making an error. In order to destroy bad habits, the pupil should find out that he is making an error and what that error is, as well as discover what the correct form is. Should the pupil who makes an error in spelling know that it is an error? Should the child who says *kin* when he should say *can* know that he is making an error and what that error is, as well as that the correct pronunciation of *can* is *can*? Some studies have shown that when both the correct form and the error which a child makes in usage of words are presented to him, clearly and correctly labeled, the results in learning are better than when only the correct form is presented.¹⁹ This fact does not sanction the exposure of pupils to any and all incorrect forms.

The fact that there are many pupils at each grade level who have many specific language disabilities throws significant responsibility upon the teacher. It is important that these disabilities be discovered as early as possible, before they become serious and tenacious, and that appropriate remedial teaching be provided. It should be remembered, however, that this remedial teaching must be done for only those pupils who need that instruction.

8. Correction and Improvement of Writing

The first draft that a pupil writes of a letter, a report, a set of directions, a review, or any given selection is likely to contain errors in usage and inadequacies in clearness of meaning. Obviously, those errors and inadequacies need to be removed for the sake of the reader. More important, however, from the point of view of instruction in speaking and writing, the pupil needs to be taught to read over what he has written, to find errors and inadequacies, to decide what to do to make improvements, and to make the needed changes or to re-write in the light of his decisions. If he does not do this thinking and changing or re-writing, the chances are good that his first draft will have supplied him with harmful practice in writing poorly. It is by this correcting, improving, and changing or re-

¹⁹ See *An Experience Curriculum in English*, p. 24. National Council of Teachers of English Monograph, No. 4. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1935.

writing that the pupil learns to write well. He learns to write well, not so much by writing first drafts about many different topics as by the right sort of proofreading and re-writing of what he has written.

Ideally, the pupil himself should do this correcting and improving. Often, however, he will need help from the teacher. But such help must be more than that given by placing marks on the paper at points where errors and inadequacies occur—the mere location of weak spots. Adequate help from the teacher will involve the raising of questions—questions which will lead the pupil to see what needs to be done to improve the writing. It is understood, of course, that improvements to be made will be concerned with content and clearness of meaning as well as with mere correctness.

9. Group Activities

Provision should be made for groups of children to carry out worthy purposes to the achievement of which group speaking and writing activities are essential. Many of the letters that need to be written, letters to classmates who are absent, invitations to class programs, and business letters requesting sample products, may well be composed by the class. The composing of class poems, and class record books made in connection with the study of topics in other school subjects, may be done by the class as a whole. A group or a class may compose and dramatize a play.

Discussions of problems that concern the entire school might well be carried on by the student body or by the representatives of the different classes. Most classes should organize themselves for purposes of holding meetings to deal with whatever crucial class problems arise. Most group activities, however, should be carried on and evaluated by the group in the light of definite items that have been taught.

CHAPTER III

LANGUAGE IN RELATION TO EXPERIENCE, THINKING, AND LEARNING

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I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This topic could legitimately lead to excursions into a half-dozen or more fields of learning, some of which at first glance seem remote and far removed from the elementary-school pupil, or for that matter from the high-school pupil. This is because many of us have been accustomed to think of language in narrow terms. We think of rules and accuracy. We think of forms of discourse, of diagrams, and of grammar. We think of precise speech. That is, we think of language first as a subject to be taught, not as a means of thinking, of teaching, of responding, of imparting, or as a manifestation and means of growth. It is as if we made football stop with the rule-book without playing the game, or law stop with the law school without reference to life under the law.

Language is more than a subject and more than an "activity." It is the major basis upon which understanding, or misunderstanding, is predicated. That is why the subject perforce is associated with psychology, both general and educational, with logic, with educational method, and with semantics, to present only a part of the list.

This chapter does not present a comprehensive view of all such ramifications as are concerned. It is not a summary of research. It concerns itself primarily with rather simple and elementary aspects of the questions presented and keeps the elementary-school teacher and pupil primarily in mind. However, even the elementary-school teacher should not be ignorant of the wide implications of language, because those wide implications are an antidote for smugness, for narrowness, and for many types of loose thinking. Moreover, understanding the nature of language serves to emphasize its social character as opposed to private or individualistic use.

II. LANGUAGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Language is closely associated with growth and development. It is an important medium for self-expression. If opportunity for proper self-expression through language is afforded, and if proper conditions are provided to stimulate use of language, the result is more than mere growth in the use of language. One of the results is opportunity for the wholesome development of personality. Unreasonable restriction, obviously, operates in the opposite direction. If children are constantly kept under restraint, are allowed to speak only when addressed, and if their writing is always concerned with what they are told to write rather than with what they want to say, it is not only language development which is hindered, but the development of poise, of self-confidence, and of general interest, as well.

The psychologist and the specialist in methods have called our attention to this relationship between language and individual development. Students of language, on the other hand, tell us that this principle is reflected in the growth of language itself. They show us that language is genuinely a part of life, not simply a subject to be taught in schools (7, 9, 18, 19, 20, 25).

One of the strongest supports for this principle comes from studies of early childhood, especially from careful records of individual children during infancy. Those records show that as the child matures language develops and that, through language, personality is expressed. Even during the first year of a child's life this association is manifest. Studies of older children indicate that their use of language is affected more by their age and social maturity than by the number of years they have spent in school.

III. LANGUAGE LEARNED THROUGH EXPERIENCE

This should not be interpreted to imply that the school has nothing to do with the development of language. It does imply, however, that the school can do its work best by encouraging the use of language in genuine thought and for genuine expression. Genuine expression occurs when a person says what he wants someone else to understand, and especially when he wants someone else to share his interest. If the school extends the interests, provides opportunity for their discussion, and stimulates desire to write about them, it has done much not only for growth in general, but specifically for growth in language. School activities which stimulate language can take many forms. A bird walk, a trip to a neighboring quarry, farm, or industry, an exciting game, a marionette theater, a good book, or a good geography lesson—all of these provide abundant

and excellent opportunities to stimulate expression of genuine thought and interest.

These examples are more or less random selections from recent observations. The bird trip included children from ten to fourteen years of age. While it was not conducted in a strictly scientific manner, it was more than an idle walk. It brought about some rather good thinking about nesting, migration, conservation, and similar topics. Interests were not developed identically, but the children were encouraged to share their interests with the others in the group, especially with those who had not gone on the trip. The result was considerable narration, exposition, argumentation, and description, not segregated and not assigned, but excellently presented and attended.

The trips to the quarry, the farm, and the industry, which happened to be a ship-building plant in which an obsolete submarine was being dismantled and cut up for junk, were for a two-fold purpose. The teachers were not only eager to stimulate thought and secure discussion; they were also interested in supplying a concrete basis of meaning for words which the children were using and reading with meager understanding. The game was utilized not merely because it was exciting, but because certain questions of sportsmanship and ethics could be verbalized. The marionettes were valuable especially because the shy child was encouraged in dramatic expression. The marionette absorbed the shyness, because the child was only a mouthpiece and was invisible, while the doll received the attention. The opportunities for discussion in geography are almost boundless, especially if the geography is made to interpret history.

It will be noted that the experiences suggested lend themselves to use in schools which are formally organized as well as in schools of varying shades and degrees of informality. One does not have to develop a curriculum around "activities" in order to provide for the stimulation and free use of language. At the same time the importance of vivid experiences in the development of language is hard to exaggerate.

This idea is easy to accept if we remember how children learn a language. Words are symbols. They have different meanings for different people, according to the experiences of those people. Children, with their limited experience, learn first those symbols which have concrete significance, usually in terms of use or action. Thus, for a child, a chair is "something you sit on." By extending experience we extend both language and the desire to employ it. There, in brief, is the psychological justification for what has been said.

It is also true that children learn many words through imitation or

chance contacts with the word. They may use such words without understanding, or with meager comprehension, with the result that their thinking and maturity are vastly overestimated. It is easier to notice this substitution of form for substance in young children than in older children. But failure to perceive such lack of comprehension and of understanding is a persistent and serious fault of teachers. For example, in the social sciences we use abstractions, such as "the labor vote," "democracy," and "the executive." These are only a few of at least a thousand difficult terms met in this field alone. Children have little or no experience to make words like these meaningful. Terms descriptive of long periods of time are also difficult for children, as is the vocabulary of arithmetic. All of these difficulties arise because the words have to be learned in the abstract, not as language is learned naturally. Any such terms should be taught very deliberately, and care should be taken to be sure they are understood. When it is possible, concrete experiences and visual aids should be employed.

The relationship between experience and development of language is recognized not only by educators and psychologists, but also by students of language. Jespersen (9), the philologist, remarks upon the advantage a child enjoys in mastering his native tongue, because his teachers during his infancy are his close associates, those who are intensely interested in his progress, and those whom he trusts. They do not demand absolute accuracy. They rejoice in his progress, and they give praise and encouragement, even though he often makes mistakes which are ludicrous. Teaching carried on in school may well utilize such informality and place similar emphasis upon mutual understanding.

1. Situations Affect Fluency

The principles of teaching just suggested in discussing a young child's learning can be carried further. It is not only the young child who is encouraged and made fluent by an interested audience. Older children are affected similarly, and grown people also are more likely to speak freely and fluently in situations which are familiar and engender self-confidence, especially in those which cause them to desire to communicate thought. That is why a person may be quite fluent in one situation, but reticent and retiring in others. All of us have known specialists who are brilliant conversationalists or lecturers when they are talking shop, but pedestrian or boring otherwise. They are fluent and brilliant only when they have something in particular to say. Perhaps their elementary schools did not encourage general conversation, nor stimulate expression

which grew out of a variety of experiences. Or perhaps their thoughts run too much in one channel.

It is not fair to assume, however, that a person who is quiet and retiring does not think, simply because he says little. It is true that meaningless chatter is indicative of loose thinking, and orderly language is a product of orderly thinking, but silence may not be truly indicative at all. The teacher should try to make oral expression reinforce orderly thinking and vice versa, but she should be slow to diagnose as incapable or hopelessly introverted an individual who simply does not say much. One reason for stressing this point is because, while in some elementary schools expression is discouraged and children are expected to speak only when spoken to, in other schools thoughtless or idle contributions are encouraged in the name of "pupil participation," with the result that children are practiced in the misuse of language and in slovenly thinking.

2. Language Evolves

To this point reference has been made continuously to the development of the language of an individual, to how an individual learns, and to how an individual's language may tend to reveal his thought and maturity. It is illuminating to note that many of the same conclusions can be derived from a study of language itself. Even a very sketchy study of the development of modern English will demonstrate that language is the result of evolution (9, 12). A language which is current, which is used, cannot remain static. It is never fixed. Its grammar changes. New words are introduced. Old words are lost or change their meanings. Inevitably one is led to the conclusion that grammars and dictionaries are descriptive, rather than prescriptive. They describe what is, not what must be.

This manifest and highly desirable situation is sometimes quite damaging to the morale of those teachers who feel that they must have something tangible to teach, something definite to require, something exact to rely upon. It is not likely that all teachers will ever be thoroughly informed regarding the evolving character of language. It is not included in the typical teacher-education curriculum, although it would contribute greatly to a desirable attitude toward the teaching of language if it were. Teachers would be much more inclined to consider language a part of life and to teach it accordingly. They would not be unconcerned with standards or with grammar, but they would be concerned also with the dynamics of living, the function of language in that living, and the effects of that living upon language development.

IV. SEMANTICS

1. The Problem in Simple Form

During the past five years, and more or less during the past twenty years, a great deal of attention has been paid to the subject of semantics. Let us first define this term simply.

By ordinary definition, semantics is the science of meanings in language, as distinguished, for example, from the science of sounds, or phonetics. The most common situation embraced in semantics arises simply because many meanings are presented by a single word. Consider the word *blue*, and the word *gas*. We speak of the *color* blue, of *feeling* blue, of listening to blue *music*, and of unexpected events as a *bolt from the blue*. From this standpoint of different meanings attached to the word, there are probably twenty different senses in which blue is used.

We use the word *gas* when we wish to describe a chemical substance, as an abbreviation for *gasoline*, as meaning *illuminating* gas, to describe a means of execution, or as descriptive of idle talk.

A great deal of research (7, 8, 17) has shown that this single factor of multiple dictionary meanings causes great difficulty of understanding. Obviously, anyone learning a new language meets this difficulty repeatedly. The extent of this problem in reading printed English, which is a new language for children, or in the language activities of children, has not been fully appreciated. Many persons have to all intents and purposes acted as if knowledge of a word in one sense guaranteed, or at least presupposed, complete knowledge of that word. Area and depth of meaning are frequently not given very much consideration. Acquaintance, rather than knowledge, appears too often to be the important goal.

Even in carefully tabulated frequency lists of English words, this difficulty is found. For example, the word *abandon* bears the notation "4a" in Thorndike's *The Teacher's Word Book of Twenty Thousand Words* (27). Certainly it is frequently met. It is, in general, a word one would call familiar, and therefore it would be considered, by many, an *easy* word. But in *A Semantic Count of English Words* (13) we find that the familiar meaning of *abandon*—to leave, to forsake, or to desert—was met about 150 times more frequently than the rare adverbial use, meaning *without control*. Which *abandon* is familiar or easy?

Baby is in the second five hundred of Thorndike's list. But in the *Semantic Count*, *baby* meaning an "infant" was met eighty-five or ninety times to one occurrence of *baby* meaning "to treat as a baby."

It is quite clear that multiple meanings of the sort indicated, abundant examples of which almost anyone can cite without difficulty, have great

bearing upon understanding what is read or heard and upon making one's self understood. This is especially true in technical or semitechnical fields, in which ordinary words are given a highly specialized significance. *Stress* to the engineer, *grace* and *salvation* to the clergyman, *project* and *situation* to the educator, have unique, even if not always pellucid, significance.

Even if the problem of semantics stopped right here, we should still need to give attention to it. The relatively simple shifts in meaning attributable to what we may call dictionary meanings complicate measurably the processes of learning to read, write, speak, and listen and their corollary thought processes. They multiply the concepts children are expected to arrive at. They interfere with understanding. They interfere with clarity. All of these and other difficulties expand enormously as added facility in the use of language is attained, because with added facility the number of words used and the number of ideas expressed are multiplied. The more experiences children enjoy, the more objects they meet and books they read, the more likelihood there is that such difficulties will develop. Teachers should never assume that a pupil's familiarity with a word in one sense guarantees understanding of all uses of that word. If we shift from one subject field to another, we meet different technical meanings for the same words.

Even the phrase in which a word is used affects its difficulty. For example, the word "thread" is a very common word. But in certain materials designed for third grade, published in 1943, the word was used in the phrases: "The thread of this argument," "The ships had to thread their way through mine fields," and "The car threaded its way through traffic."

In the same materials, "point" was used in: "To give point to his statement," and "To point the way to peace."

Conversations with third-grade pupils, who, according to standard tests, were reading at fourth- and fifth-grade level, demonstrated that understanding ranged from very vague comprehension of the general "thread" of the discussion to fair comprehension. The teacher used each of the phrases to interest the children in words. They were asked to tell the different uses they knew of each of these words and to look for other meanings in their dictionaries.

2. Difficulty of Defining

However, the problem of semantics does not stop with such relatively simple differences of meaning. Apart from what the dictionary says, words have meaning for individuals according to the experiences which

such individuals have had, according to their prejudices, and according to their beliefs. The word "democracy" when Franklin Roosevelt uses it is quite different from the same word used by Hitler. The term "progressive education" is used to refer to more than one type of teaching. Moreover, there is an emotional loading in each of these terms. "Progressive education" implies something dangerous and sinister to some people, something excellent and encouraging to others, regardless of how it is defined. When words excite strong feeling, their meanings are affected.

In effect, this means that words are not ordinarily capable of exact definition, because each person uses words in accordance with the meanings they have for him or in order to produce an effect on those who hear what he says or read what he writes. This fact has a double significance for teachers. First, we should be sure that children understand in an undistorted sense the words we use and the words they read. Second, we should pay a great deal of attention to the meanings children try to convey when they themselves speak and write. To the extent that their maturity permits, we should try to make them critical readers and listeners. We should also help them to convey their own messages accurately.

Walpole (28: chap. vi) treats this problem very concretely when he speaks of definitions. In supplying definitions for others, he says, we must always begin at a point that is familiar to the other person. Then we may proceed to define in terms of age, shape, position, physical characteristics, or other descriptive terms. Definition in anything except approximate terms is very difficult. In order to ensure understanding, Walpole recommends that one translate passages of reading matter into Basic English. Basic English, largely the work of C. K. Ogden, is a list of about nine hundred words with which, by paraphrasing and with some ingenuity, it is alleged that one can express any thought which one desires, if scientific or technical material is not involved. Extravagant claims have been made for Basic English, into which this discussion will not enter. But the idea of paraphrasing has merit. If a child is asked to say in his own words what a passage which he has read means to him, the teacher can usually find out the extent to which he understands, and the child's power over language is also developed.

It is obvious that difficulties will be discovered when children are asked to put highly figurative language in their own words. A few years ago a widely used fifth-grade history text spoke of William Lloyd Garrison as "entering this fray [the abolitionist argument] as a martyr of old going to the stake." Each child in a certain room using this text was told to look up in his dictionary any word he did not know. But when twenty-five children were asked to put the paragraph containing this reference in

their own words, only one knew what a "martyr of old" was, none saw the analogy, and three did not know whether the martyr was going to a "stake" or a "steak."

But even plain, ordinary words occasion difficulty. The semanticists tell us, with much reason, that words do not have simple, single, invariable meanings. The meanings vary with the user and with the situation.

V. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

The foregoing considerations concerning the relations between language, growth, experience, and thinking are not simply theoretical. They have definite implications for teaching. Most obviously they imply that language should be developed through using it to express thought. Language is not designed for use in a vacuum, but as a medium involving a sender and a receiver of thought. They also imply that clear reception is not ensured. Consequently, certain important educational principles can be stated.

1. Principles of Instruction

a) Children should be given abundant opportunity for and practice in transmission of their thoughts, through both oral and written language.

b) This opportunity for practice should occur in natural settings and should employ the vernacular. Much of it should be oral and conversational.

It should be noted that oral usage, and especially conversational use, has considerable effect upon both sentence structure and thought sequence. One should expect and encourage differences between oral and written discourse. A person speaking in normal circumstances does not plan his sentence in advance (9). He composes it as he speaks. He shifts his point of view, collects ideas as he goes along, sometimes finds himself in the midst of an involved expression, then stops and starts anew. He can discover, as he can rarely discover in written discourse, that he is not using words as his listener might use the same words. That is, he becomes aware of certain semantic difficulties. Consequently, oral language should be encouraged.

c) Directions and explanations should be presented to children in meaningful terms that they can understand.

A teacher must be sure that the words she uses are significant to the children (16). Clear, careful enunciation is not sufficient. Not only the literal meanings of the words, but the feeling and emotional loading of the words need to be weighed carefully for general effect as well as for their intellectual effect.

d) Careful attention must be given to children's reading from the standpoint of clear interpretation of what they read.

It is important that the teacher know about the difficulties pupils encounter in their efforts to interpret different types of reading materials. It is a good plan for the teacher to talk with the children, to learn what they think and why they think it, trying particularly to understand their feelings and attitudes.

e) Teachers should be on guard against lifting words or quotations out of context and should be vigilant in helping children to understand the danger that lies in that practice.

This fallacy is frequently not only condoned, but it is actually practiced and taught, and that by a procedure which claims to encourage "reading for thought." To illustrate: A sixth-grade group was studying a unit in one of the social sciences. The teacher had prepared a list of questions, arranged topically. After each of the questions appeared a reference, usually a reference to a sentence or two in a collateral text or book. The children were expected to consult those references and thus to arrive at an answer to the question, eventually at a judgment concerning the topic. Obviously, this approach did not result in clear thinking. Isolated sentences not only do not portray the development of an author's thoughts, but they may do absolute violence to those thoughts. A great deal of this sort of practice has gone on under the name of "training in elementary research," while as a matter of fact it is frequently a training in superficial thinking.

A favorite trick of demagogues and of certain lawyers is to quote exactly, as far as literal repetition is concerned, but most inexactly as far as thought is concerned, by lifting words or phrases out of their context. Advertisements are frequently made of the same stuff.

f) Teachers should help children to avoid verbal fallacies.

Some of these occur when the fact that a word has more than one meaning is disregarded. For example, the word "democratic" can be used in speaking of the "Democratic" party or in its general sense. Some children are prone to believe that only the members of the "Democratic" party are democratic. This, of course, is an error attributable to the dual sense in which the word is used.

Another arises when some name or label used with reference to a person or movement is confused with real quality or genuine attributes. For instance, many children seem to think that calling a person a bad name makes that person bad, or labeling something by a good name makes it good. Demagogues often use this device. What they choose to oppose, for example, they may call "un-American." They know that most

Americans believe that American products and American ideals are good and should be supported. No one would quarrel with that general idea. But years ago our early public schools were opposed on the grounds that they were "un-American." Public schools were a new idea in America, but they were not in conflict with American ideals, which is what the label implied.

In recent years both major political parties have been accused of sponsoring "un-American" ideas. Similarly, in labor disputes some critics have labeled unions "un-American," while others have termed the operators the same. As a matter of fact, both sides or neither might be "American." A name does not create a situation.

A kindergarten child, exhibiting the same type of thinking, said his brother had measles. He was not sure whether they were German measles or Japanese, but he knew they were bad. He was convinced that all things called Japanese or German were reprehensible, and that all things reprehensible might well be labeled Japanese or German.

We can do much to improve both clarity of expression and straight thinking if we help children to avoid such fallacies.

g) Teachers should recognize the fact that as words depart from objective referents, they are increasingly difficult for children to comprehend.

When a child begins to learn language, he learns first and most readily those words which refer to definite objects or to readily comprehended experiences. A child can understand words like *father*, *Jake*, *apple*, *dog*, *pretty*, and *run*. They stand for objects or persons he can see, qualities he can understand, or actions he can perform. Abstractions stand for no particular person, thing, or action. Moreover, they usually carry an emotional loading which complicates not only the meaning, but the issue.

We should be very careful to see that explanations of abstractions are in consonance with the experiences and the vocabularies of the children involved. We need to teach such meanings deliberately, consciously. And we should see that those meanings are extended as children attain higher levels of age, of maturity, and of understanding, for meanings are not static. They change with the factors just listed, and especially do they display shifts which are due to changes in the emotional loading.

h) Avoid two dangers inherent in semantics, namely overloading and overestimating the child.

The first danger arises when, mindful of the multiple meanings of words, one rushes to the conclusion that all meanings must be taught immediately. The second enters when or if one attempts to make children completely aware of semantic implications of the sort which have

been described, apart from the simple fact that multiple dictionary meanings do exist.

The inadvisability of teaching all meanings of words should be obvious. While one should know the limitations of a child's knowledge and should distinguish between frequency counts based upon nonsemantic treatment and counts which take cognizance of semantic variations, there are many meanings of many common words which are quite foreign to a child's experience, and which he has no occasion to utilize in his normal experience. Let those meanings rest until the necessity for them arises.

The second danger is that of trying to make children aware of all the emotional loadings of words, of semantic shifts, and of the difficulty of defining accurately. Children may easily be burdened with overmuch detail, or they may become mystified. The idea of developing understanding is sound enough, but that understanding should be developed inductively with elementary-school children and probably with secondary-school pupils. Experiences, suggestions, and careful teaching of an indirect type, rather than direct teaching, seem wisest.

For the teacher himself the field of semantics offers rich and abundant opportunity for thought and self-analysis. Fundamentally, the thought which pervades semantics is not new. Centuries ago, Plato says, Socrates admonished his hearers to agree upon definitions before they argued, and deplored the human tendency to fail to understand that the same words have different meanings. It is wholesome, good for the soul to examine one's self, to examine language, and to analyze motives and attitudes as the semanticists exhort us to examine and analyze. It is good to wonder if we have made ourselves clear, if we understand authors, speakers, politicians, and statesmen. It is also good to examine our teaching and the effects of that teaching with discrimination.

2. Additional Applications

a. Applications to Oral Language. All of the principles just cited, as well as the statements of how language and experience are related, show the importance of oral language. It is the child's first contact with language. Moreover, it provides an important contribution to the development of personality. It provides an opportunity for transmitting thought and, consequently, for self-expression, which no other medium presents. It also gives the teacher an opportunity to analyze and evaluate both the thinking and the growth of the child.

To accomplish these ends most of the teaching of oral language should be the result of normal activities which require its use. This does not imply that there should never be instruction in formal language or in prepa-

ration for formal speech. These have their place. But it does imply that most of this development should result from the normal, spontaneous use of language in normal situations which demand that use. This means that the school and classroom should be organized so as to provide such situations. Children should not only be permitted to engage in activities which require them to speak to each other, but they should be encouraged to do so. Trips and excursions, book reports, activities involving the use of tools and muscles, elementary science, group projects which require discussion, planning what the group wishes to do, evaluating what has been done—these are only some of the normal classroom activities which encourage the use of oral language. On the other hand, in classrooms in which children speak only when spoken to, or when they recite, growth in both language and development of personality is hindered.

Just as we want children to speak so that they may be understood, teachers should be careful to speak so that their thoughts are clear to children. A few examples from a study by Paul McKee (16) will indicate the importance of this. In a fifth grade, a teacher remarked that cotton was planted, at a certain period, "along the Atlantic coast on only a narrow strip of land." Some children thought this meant that sea water was a requisite, some thought that cotton could grow only near the ocean, and some that cotton only was planted there.

In a third grade the teacher said that the Indians made shields that were "from 12 to 16 inches across." Some of the children thought the shield was "that thick," some that it was "that wide," some that "the shields were shaped like a cross." Of course many of the children understood both statements correctly. What might have been the result if, instead of shields or strips of land, the teacher had been speaking of the labor movement or of democracy?

b. *Applications to Written Language.* We know that there are relationships between the maturity of children, the types of sentences they use (18, 19, 20), and the grammar they can appreciate. We also know that there is much disagreement concerning what is "right" in English. The expression, "It is me," split infinitives, and prepositions at the ends of sentences are not necessarily wrong (12), and in fact are frequently preferable to the more precise writing of people who are overly concerned about them. These are just a few examples from dozens of instances which might be cited. The implication is that in teaching written language one should be concerned with seeing that the writing has a vital social purpose, and not rely upon drill, rules, and formal assignments. Let the grammar be introduced inductively as it is needed and as it can be understood.

c. *General Language Development.* Language development is a unified, not a fragmentary process (15). Spelling, reading, and oral and written expression are different aspects of that development. They are interrelated. They reinforce each other. Difficulty with one often brings about difficulty with the others. Consequently, even though this section does not treat reading, at least some mention should be made of the relationship that exists between reading and other phases of language.

Reading should include exercises in critical thinking and interpretation, which should be expressed in oral or written language. Ask children to explain what they have read, to give examples, and to express opinions. Ask them to say why they like or dislike what they have read. Let them say whether they would like to do the things they read about. As the maturity of the children permits, encourage them to talk about the reasonableness of what they read, especially in passages from the social studies materials. Critical thinking, as well as language, may be developed by such measures. It is often profitable to have children paraphrase or put into their own language the materials they read. This can be accompanied by attention to choice of words and variety of expression as well as to organization of thought.

Many school subjects present language difficulties which can be solved by having children talk about them. At the same time, the teacher is helped to an appreciation of the difficulties the children face as well as of the understanding they reach. For example, the reading of maps introduces many new ideas and words (25). But maps are interesting to children. They like to talk about what a map displays. And, in the course of conversations about maps, much good language work can accompany good teaching of geography. It was by listening to children that a teacher found that many of her class thought a mountain range was a place in the mountains where cattle grazed; that an island floated in the sea; and that north was always "up" on the map. Geography texts, science materials, and history books are particularly likely (7, 8, 21) to introduce terms without developing a full understanding of them. Unless these terms are talked about they are likely to be accepted superficially and used just as superficially. Training in language should combat this loose use of terms.

The reference work children do should further contribute to accuracy. Children should be encouraged to look up material, but they should be held accountable for the accuracy of their reports on what they have looked up.

In all of our instruction, we should be careful to see that children understand the words and language they use.

VI. SUMMARY

If language development proceeds normally and naturally in connection with rich and varied experiences, growth in intellectual, social, and emotional capacities may be confidently assumed. Language is a major means of education.

Language is also a vehicle of thought, but thought is frequently obscured because words have multiple meanings and "emotional loadings." Children should be made aware of the dangers inherent in these multiple meanings and emotional loadings of words and should be taught to speak and write in terms that will be easily and correctly understood. Teachers should watch their own instructional speaking and writing to be sure that they clarify rather than confuse the issues discussed.

The teacher should understand that language is not static, but is still growing. She should employ all the experiences of the child, whether in school or out, as sources of meaning and inspiration for language development. The child should be stimulated to gain and to share real understanding of his experiences rather than to chatter and to write superficially about them.

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CHAPTER IV

GROWTH IN LANGUAGE POWER AS RELATED TO CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Language is the instrument of thought and of communication. The child's power to grasp, to enter into, and to reflect upon the experiences he has is dependent to a large degree upon his facility in the use of verbal symbols. Conversely, as his experience is broadened and deepened, language symbols acquire meaning for him, and further growth and learning become possible to him. Also, it is through language power that he is able to express his own thoughts and emotions, to share vicariously in those of others, and to participate in the life of his social group.

Such a view of language ties up the child's progress in the mastery of it with his advancing maturity. Therefore, instead of measuring growth in language merely in terms of errors eliminated and blanks correctly filled, it is the purpose of this chapter to center attention primarily upon positive evidences of growth in the child's command of language in the circumstances in which he commonly uses it, and to analyze, so far as possible, the elements contributing to his linguistic development which have most significance for classroom instruction.

I. THE YOUNG CHILD'S GROWTH IN LANGUAGE

1. Preschool Development

The most fruitful approach to such a problem is to watch children making their first attempts at communicating ideas. The toddler of two, running unsteadily by the edge of the pond in a city park, stops short, points excitedly to the ducks cruising beneath a bush, and ejaculates explosively, "Ducks! Two ducks!" He is learning the names of objects which are a part of his everyday experience. At the same time, he is sensing the difference between one and more than one—the basic concept of singular and plural. A little later he stands by his father on the front seat

of a car and, with eyes sparkling with anticipation at the first growl from the engine, says emphatically, "Fun!" Whether the generalization is clear-cut in his mind or not, he has reached a new level of thinking and of language development.

At breakfast, his mother entices him to eat his cereal by noting that everyone else at the table has some too. The child points at each member of the family, in turn, saying, "Daddy ump some," "Mommy ump some," and so on until his enumeration is complete. The noun and the pronoun stand out as symbols of concrete objects, but the pattern of words which unite them into a statement is harder to master. Later a friend promises to bring him a present from Chicago. What it is to be is a *secret*. Having recently met up with a *cricket*, he associates a "seacrick" with it. When the tin shapes for making mud pies arrive, he recognizes each in turn as "Old Mr. Turtle," "The Great Bullfrog," and other friends of a story-book world. Then he looks accusingly at the donor and inquires, "But where's the *seacrick*?" Half a dozen secrets will be necessary to establish that generalization through a repetition of the experience.

By the age of three the child is familiar with the concept, *river*, for he has lived on the Iowa River and has visited relatives who daily cross the Mississippi. In the summer he makes his first trip to a *lake*—a new concept, though associated with *water*, like *river*. Each visitor, in turn, he takes to the water's edge, announcing, "That's the kind of *water* that you call a *lake*." By four, he is talking fluently of everything from "Wouldn't you like to be a bee?" to "Lobster has very high food value, they say."

All this time, also, not only direct experience but books are contributing daily to the building up of concepts basic to linguistic growth. "Little Toot" throws out a *tow* rope to the larger vessel in New York Harbor, while emitting frantically the smoke-ringed message, "Send Out Succor." Heretofore, the four-year-old has, figuratively speaking, spelled his *tow* with an *oe* and his *succor* with a *ker*. The shifts in visualization, taste, and hearing necessitated by such an extension of meanings is tremendous. Gradually, vicarious experience through books puts new meaning into familiar words.

2. Developing Meanings and Expression through Experience

It is obvious from these examples that it is *out of the materials of experience* that the child evolves meaning and concepts, attaching to them verbal symbols. From them he creates those mental constructs necessary to understanding the world about him and to continuing use of language as a means to growth (51). Research studies show a striking impetus to the growth of vocabulary between the ages of eighteen months and two years, when the child for the first time grasps the fact that objects have names

(1, 59, 60, 65, 67). From that moment on he changes, as Anderson points out, "from a passive individual to an active one, searching for meanings in his environment." If growth in language is dependent upon the impulse to learn and upon stimulation from the environment, the importance of a rich program in the elementary school, affording opportunity for wide contacts with objects and experiences from the real world about the child, is patent. Defining lists of words on the blackboard, filling in blanks in exercises, and writing themes on topics which have little relationship to what is going on at the moment in school or at home can never be a substitute for development in the classroom of a wealth of opportunities for exploring the world in which children live and for stimulating them to thought and discussion concerning it.

Cantor (33) found at the first-grade level that a series of excursions about Cincinnati, in which the children of the slums came to know the concrete objects for which words stand, provided a vocabulary as rich as that of an entire first-year course in reading. Such results may usually be expected if teachers take time to fix facts and words in the children's minds by discussion afterward and to clear up vague understandings and misconceptions which may have been carried away from such excursions. Horn (51) points out that the only way to prevent verbalism—the meaningless parroting of words which children have vaguely grasped from hearing or seeing them used by others—is to develop meanings in relationship to concrete experiences. For example, first-grade children in Minneapolis, after visiting the University Farm, talk glibly of hatching eggs in incubators, separating milk from cream, and shearing sheep to obtain materials for winter coats and rugs. Third-grade children, building and studying airplanes, develop a vocabulary that is amazing even to adults. Recently an eighth-grade class, preparing an exhibit and program on frontiers in modern life which challenge boys and girls today, achieved a wealth of words and a maturity of expression exceeding that of any similar period of their training.

II. THE LANGUAGE-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF THE SCHOOL

1. Emphasis upon Expression in an Experience Program

Merely setting the stage is not enough. Conscious attention to the meanings of words and to their usefulness for the expression of ideas is imperative. The teacher is in a position to lead children to a precision and extension of language which, without her assistance, they could not achieve for themselves. Sometimes the problem is to learn words new to the child's experience. Sometimes it is to give specific application to general terms, as in the case of *water*, now applied to *river* and now to *lake*.

Sometimes it is to build generalizations out of specific experiences, as in the use of *secret* in the incident related above. Often it is to derive new meanings for old words previously met in different contexts, as in the instance of the "tow" rope and the call for "succor." Frequently, also, it is to help refine the child's use of language by seeking the most *exact* or the most *concrete* word to express an experience which he has just had or shared with others. For example, first-grade children, stroking a bunny which was visiting school at Easter, were asked to tell what the bunny *felt like*. "It feels nice," "It feels fine," "It feels swell" were the immediate responses of the children. Without the teacher's urging that they help us to understand still more clearly *what* the bunny *felt like*, they would never have achieved the "It feels *soft*" or "It feels *like silk*," which came triumphantly in the end.

An eighth-grade class characterized "Red Chief" as "dumb" and "rowdy." Pressed by the teacher to use their dictionaries, they came forth with *obstreperous*, *irrepressible*, *unruly*, and the like. The search for the *best* word to reproduce an experience forces children to make *that connection between reality and the language symbol* which, as the psychologist points out, is basic to growth in language power (51).

Drever (39) noted that among certain children increase in vocabulary coincided with periods of travel, but growth in sentence building occurred during the uneventful interim. It is obvious that training in the adequate reproduction of experience for sharing with others must go beyond mere vocabulary building to the actual grappling with ideas and to the expression of appropriate relationships among them. A discussion of this aspect of growth follows in the section on sentences and thinking.

2. Other Environmental Factors Influencing Language

There is a positive correlation between the socio-economic status of parents and the linguistic progress of children (37, 38, 59, 60, 67, 71). Again, this suggests the importance for language development of the quality of experience and of stimulation through environment. Association with adults is another significant factor in the growth of the child's vocabulary and in his mastery of articulation and the structural features of language (36, 37, 38, 59, 60). Studies of twins, for example, indicate that children who can maintain satisfactory social relations without mastery of conventional language are not stimulated to attain such mastery. Harrison (12), for that reason, urges smaller classes and increased attention from adults for children in the primary grades. The importance of the teacher's own voice and the example of careful articulation and concreteness of vocabulary which she sets before the children cannot be overestimated.

On the other hand, nursery-school and kindergarten teachers often use children as stimulants to lead into normal conversation youngsters who are reticent because they have associated only with adults.

3. The Importance of Constant Practice in the Use of Language

Another crucial element in children's development in language is the amount of opportunity they have for using it. Brandenberg (32) estimates that a child of three to four years of age is inactive linguistically only nineteen minutes during a day's waking time. His longest single period of silence is four minutes. At three he says approximately 7,600 words per day; at five, 10,500. These are the years of phenomenal linguistic growth. At a year he has two or three different words at his command; at six, probably 2,500 (67). At three he has a highly developed system of linguistic habits. At five he is using many of the most complex forms of sentence structure with appropriate inflections (59, 60).

There is no possible explanation for so tremendous an achievement except that the environment has challenged the child, that his urge to understand and to participate in the activities of normal life has been a driving force to mastery of the means of such participation, and that an opportunity to expand his powers by constant talking has been accorded him. Too frequently, school is a place for silence. Little children learn that they must be quiet and not talk when they cross the threshold of the classroom. Some authorities believe that the first year or two in school constitute a hindrance rather than a help in the development of language (12). At least five factors seem to be involved. One is the reduction in opportunities for talking. A second is the unavoidable shock of being suddenly thrown into a large group and the child's consequent fear of expressing himself in the presence of many children. Another is the frequent neglect of *expression* for concentration upon *reading* materials in which both vocabulary and sentence structure are far below the level already achieved by the child in his own speech. A fourth is the removal of the child from constant association with adults and the increase in his contacts with other children no more expert in the use of language than he is. While such association is an asset from the point of view of the social give-and-take inherent in control over language, it is a deterrent to the mastery of forms. A fifth explanation for a possible set-back in language on entrance to school is that the child must, of necessity, be urged to improve the *quality* of his expression, because mere increased loquacity, which is often characteristic of the years from three to five, is not sufficient for purposes of refinement of language, as contemplated in the school program (17).

The challenge to the primary school, therefore, is to maintain a classroom environment sufficiently stimulating to expand the child's vocabulary and to stretch his language powers; to insure sufficient opportunity for small-group discussion within the class as a whole and for personal growth in expression to offset the limited type of language experience afforded by the basic reader; and, without deterring the spontaneity of the child's expression, to furnish positive help and standards in the use of language in direct relationship to all the experiences of the school day.

4. The Need of a Balanced Experience with Language

Well-rounded language development necessitates a balanced experiential background. Courses of study usually give more adequate help in developing power in language through units in the social studies than they do in any other area. In addition, understanding and enjoyment of nature and animals are perennially satisfying factors in the lives of children and should furnish opportunities for speaking and writing. Boys and girls, many of them, come to school bursting with experiences of an intimate, personal nature, which they wish to share with their classmates—the furlough of a brother home from the front, the advent of a new baby, or the acquisition of a much-prized cowboy suit or a doll with eyes that shut. School activities offer an excellent laboratory for the achievement of real purposes through language. The play life of children is especially important as a basis for conversation and discussion because their out-of-school language differs materially from that used in the more formal atmosphere of the classroom. Imaginative stories and games and the reading of poetry also deserve a large place in the elementary curriculum, so that children may be stimulated to retell and to embroider the stories they so much enjoy or to invent new ones according to some original pattern. Recognition of all these types of experience is characteristic of the best courses of study (5, 22, 27).

5. Special Need of a Vital Experience Program in the Middle and Upper Grades

Although the research available in language development as it is related to the growth of children is largely concerned with the preschool and primary years, the principles which it substantiates are applicable also to the middle and upper grades. With the increased use of books as sources of information in the middle grades, the need arises for supplementing reading experience with direct contact with the child's own environment as a means of avoiding mere verbalism. Greater care is necessary to put specific meaning into words by definition in terms of concrete

experience. Increased precision is required as the child comes to grips with the problem of saying exactly what he means.

The little child comes freshly to the association of a single experience with the basic meaning of a word. The pupil in the middle grades has a background of experience which, while it has increased his stock of basic concepts, has given him only vague associations or half meanings for words which he hears or reads without clear definition. Also, he has absorbed from his environment certain emotional connotations of words which further hinder him from an objective approach to meaning. Jersild (17, 53), for example, reports asking children in Grades IV, V, and VI to define the word *strike*. Responses varied from a vague idea of the fact of *conflict* (when people break windows and throw stones at the police), or outward evidences of conflict (when people walk outside a shop with signs on their backs with words like "unfair" on them), through consciousness of the parties to the conflict (when the workers and the bosses have an argument and the workers stop working), to a clear concept of the issues involved and of the far-reaching effects of the outcome.

Greater precision of definition is also demanded of the child as he progresses from the primary grades into the middle and upper grades. Gunderson (11), for example, noted the tendency of second-grade children to define things in terms of use or association: A *chair* is something to sit on. *Good* suggested ice cream; *happy* a picnic at the beach. It is peculiarly, the job of the middle and upper years to foster growth toward precision of definition, which represents in itself an advance in power to generalize from experience.

It is in these years also that the problem of multiple meanings of words comes to a head. It is present earlier, of course. (Witness the kindergarten child's response that a "meddlesome" mouse was one with many medals, or the first-grade child's drawing of God "driving" Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden in a Ford car.) But the middle years, with their extended program in reading and the acquiring of experience more largely through books, place a peculiar responsibility upon the teacher for deepening and extending the range of meanings expressed by words. Note, for example, the various meanings of so simple a word as "run," as presented in a recent textbook in educational psychology (9:433):

You have a run in your stocking.

This train runs from Chicago to Minneapolis.

The vine runs up the house.

This well runs dry in summer.

The child's nose runs.

The color in this cloth runs when it is washed.

Never run into trouble.

The words of an old song run through my head.
To run a horse is inhuman.
He made a good run for Congress.
The run in the hills was full of water.
The run of events is clear.
We had a run of good luck.
The farm has a cattle run through the fields to the pasture.

The further the child progresses in the elementary school, the greater is the danger that his language period may degenerate into one of exercise-doing, learning words in columns out of context, or studying language forms divorced from the use he is making of language during the rest of the day (66). Special care, therefore, needs to be exercised to continue the kind of rich program of well-motivated enterprises common in the lower grades in order that the growth of language may continue in relationship to the development of meaning and that the challenge of a social purpose may motivate expression. Then the needed remedial drill and the positive instruction in word knowledge and linguistic forms may be related directly to the problems which confront the pupil in his daily use of language (22, 24, 27, 28).

III. LANGUAGE AND THINKING

In the process of growth, language power and thought power mature together. They are mutually dependent one upon the other. Successful teaching of language, therefore, holds these powers in constant relationship and refuses to divorce instruction in language from improvement in the actual expression of ideas.

1. Thinking and the Ordering of Experience

Growth in thinking is growth in the process of ordering, relating, and interpreting experience. An older psychology thought of childhood as a time for memorizing, not for thinking, and of the elementary-school years as a period for drill, in contrast to problem-solving. Today, psychologists are convinced that all types of mental growth are involved in a continuous and all-inclusive series of developments, in spite of the fact that certain types of intellectual performance may seem more clearly identifiable than others at different stages of the child's growth.

2. The Beginnings of Generalization

The little child, exploring the relationships of the physical world, for example, begins to understand the principle of cause and effect. As he accumulates concrete experience, he evolves generalizations; and as he acquires mastery of language, he progresses from direct to vicarious experi-

ence and from concrete to abstract thinking. Teachers of little children can use discussion of personal and classroom experience to foster such growth; but they cannot push the child beyond his level of development. Trained observers watching seven-year-olds in both free and directed discussion have noted how slight is their power to concentrate upon a single idea for any length of time (3). The topic under consideration controls only to a limited degree the pattern of their discussion. Although they may not wander far afield from the main consideration, subthemes of various kinds distract their attention by recalling to them exciting experiences of their own that are more absorbing than the central topic, and they clamor to tell those experiences to their classmates. They give evidence of the beginnings of power to generalize, to sense relationships, to reason from cause to effect or from effect to cause, and even to think in terms of experiences reported by others as well as in terms of their own. But the process is slow in developing, and the concrete and the personal often interfere with sustained thinking about a central problem. Teachers in the primary grades will do well to furnish plenty of opportunity for this kind of discussion in the classroom, so that the relationship between the personal experience of the children and the generalizations to be established may be more readily apparent and more naturally suggested. Discussions about natural phenomena which have been observed and absorbing enterprises which are under way are especially appropriate for this purpose.

3. The Process of Organization in the Development of Language

In general, pupils in the elementary school give evidence of growth in power to think as they become increasingly able (1) to stick to the subject under discussion, (2) to relate events in the simple sequence of time, (3) to order ideas in relationship to a problem or a purpose, and (4) to interpret experience, generalize concerning it, or draw inferences from it. The processes are alike at all levels of development, but the problems will vary in complexity with the age and experience of the children. A recent science reader for preschool children teaches the classification of animals and the characteristics of species by pictorial groups of four animals, one of which is out of place, as, for example, a fish swimming through the grass along side of a cow, a horse, and a sheep grazing there. Organization of ideas begins as simply as that in connection with the activities of the school day. Children in the kindergarten list the things they see during a walk around the block. They discover the list is easier to remember if they group what they have seen under the headings *trees*, *animals*, *flowers*, and *people*. Later they learn that certain kinds of food build muscles; others build bones; and still others furnish fat or energy. They

make charts by pasting pictures of fruit, bread, milk, vegetables, or meat under the proper headings. This is the process of developing a sense of organization by grappling with ideas that demand ordering if learning is to take place.

Time was when teachers of the language arts began with the subject of outlining before the child had anything to organize. Normal conditions of growth demand that the *problem of organizing data* present itself first in the experience of the child. The outline then becomes a means to ordering that experience either for the child himself or for his presentation of it to others. For example, a group of third-grade pupils set out to discover what conditions were like in their community in pioneer days. The list of twenty-one questions which they prepared for investigation was a hit-and-miss affair until the teacher suggested grouping them:

Questions We Want To Answer about Evansville in Pioneer Days

1. What furniture did the early settlers have in their houses?
2. Where did the children go to school?
3. What did the women do all day?
4. What kind of stoves did they have for cooking?
5. What kind of games did the children play?
6. Where did the men go to work?
7. Did they have to kill wild animals?
8. Did they have schoolbooks like ours?
9. Where did their food come from?
10. What kind of houses did they have?
11. Where did they get their clothes?
12. What kind of dresses did the women and girls have?
13. Where did the children sleep?
14. What did they have to eat?
15. Did the children go wading in the river?
16. Did they have mills in those days?
17. Are any of their homes still here?
18. How did they haul their things?
19. Did they travel by boat or on land?
20. What kind of dolls and toys did the children have?
21. How did they take care of little babies?

The Same Questions Grouped into Seven Main Topics

- I. What kind of homes did the early settlers have?
(1, 4, 10, 13, 17)
- II. Where did they get their food and other supplies?
(7, 9, 11, 14)
- III. What did the men do for a living?
(6, 16)
- IV. How did the women spend their time?
(3, 12, 21)

- V. What means of transportation had they?
(18, 19)
- VI. What kind of schools did they have?
(2, 8)
- VII. What did the children do for a good time?
(5, 15, 20)

The details were worked out by committees corresponding to the large divisions of the outline, which became a means of ordering and grouping the responsibilities of each pupil.

4. Outlining as a Means to the Ordering of Ideas

In the middle and upper grades pupils begin to make longer individual reports. They learn to combine ideas from several sources and to clarify the relationship of each to the topic as a whole by means of main and subordinate headings in the outline. Textbooks seldom give sufficient concrete help with this problem, which is a very real one in the middle and upper years. The following outline by an eighth-grade girl shows the complexity of the problem. The figures in parentheses after each item indicate from which of the three sources in her bibliography she found the material.

BOOKMOBILES: LIBRARIES ON WHEELS

- I. What bookmobiles are
 - A. Traveling libraries taking books to readers in far-off places (1, 2, 3)
 - B. Trucks fitted up with bookcases and library counters (1, 2)
 - 1. Sides lift up to display books (1, 2)
 - 2. Back lifts up and case revolves (2)
- II. Where bookmobiles go
 - A. Some states that have them
 - 1. Vermont (1, 2, 3)
 - 2. Louisiana (1, 2, 3)
 - 3. California (3)
 - 4. Texas (1)
 - B. Places used for stops
 - 1. County libraries (2)
 - 2. Country stores and restaurants (1)
 - 3. Farmhouses (1, 3)
 - 4. Schools (1, 2)
 - 5. Churches (1)
- III. Kind of service bookmobiles give
 - A. Help with school work
 - 1. *Humphrey* and nature study (2)
 - 2. Unit on Scandinavia (3)
 - 3. Choral speaking (2)

- B. Suggested children's reading
 - 1. Story-telling in schools (1)
 - 2. Three children on donkey, bareback (1)
 - 3. California children—11 to 42 books each per year (3)
 - C. Suggesting reading for older men and women who have never had books
 - 1. Grandfather reads *Huck Finn* (1)
 - 2. Women want love stories (3)
 - 3. Men want Westerns and mystery stories (3)
 - D. Help with earning and working
 - 1. Scientific farming (1)
 - 2. Learning to tan hides (3)
 - 3. Remaking farm for tung oil (1)
 - 4. Repairing furniture (3)
 - 5. Studying for citizenship (1)
- IV. Amount of service bookmobiles give
- A. Vermont: 150 schools and 52 libraries every 8 weeks (2)
 - B. Texas: Bookmobile makes 8 routes every 2 weeks—600 books a day (1)
- V. Frontiers of the future
- A. Many counties are without library service
 - 1. Thirty-nine million people have no library service (3)
 - 2. Only 400 out of 3,000 counties have traveling libraries (3)
 - B. All need more money
 - 1. Library funds are always cut in depression (1)
 - 2. Library funds taken for relief—"You can't eat books" (1)
 - C. All need more books
 - 1. Woman waits two years for *Gone with the Wind* (1)
 - 2. Woman dies without last two pages of torn book (1)

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Teachers need to develop such outlines step by step with their pupils in the classroom as they grapple with the problem of organizing material to present to their fellows. Sometimes planning a single communal outline from material read by different pupils gives an interesting example of the process of drawing material from different sources to develop a single topic. Such a procedure gives emphasis to the important fact that the outline should always be *a means of ordering ideas and experiences*, and never an end in itself.

5. The Process of Problem-solving in the Language Arts

It is wasteful to leave children to stumble into the processes of reasoning for themselves. If maximum growth is to be attained, they must be given direct, positive instruction in how to attack their problems by means of the logical procedure of (1) defining a problem, (2) collecting and evaluating material related to the problem, (3) organizing it so that its relationship to the main topic and to other ideas bearing upon the topic is clear to the reader or listener, and (4) presenting it effectively for others. It is obvious that such teaching should be done in relationship to every activity of the school day and not alone in a period set aside for language.

6. Defending and Supporting Ideas

Recent months have brought to the fore the importance of the attitudes and the convictions of children. Observations of classroom activities suggest that more attention has been given in the past to mere reporting of factual material than to expressing convictions and defending ideas. So simple a discussion as "Why I Am Glad I Live in . . . " presents the problem of a straightforward enumeration of two, three, four, or five reasons and affords an opportunity for the discussion of each in succession, completing what is said about each reason before going on to the next. This is a difficult process for children to learn. Growth in effective use of it is evidence of increased maturity.

In all matters of this kind, growth is conditioned by a dynamic purpose, by direct teaching of proper methods of attack upon the problem, and by evaluation in terms of the effectiveness of the message so far as the reader or listener is concerned. If a speaker or writer has presented his material clearly, the listener or reader should have it as clearly outlined in his mind as does the one who has presented the ideas.

Defense of an idea necessitates ability to produce evidence or to back up statements by authority. Even little children can learn to give the source of their convictions. The problem may be as simple as this: "Our mailman told me that every day he had to take back letters that were incorrectly addressed," or "Here's a picture that shows how plain the colonists' clothes were," or "The last issue of *Weekly Reader* had an article on that." One of the chief functions of such training at the elementary level is to avoid training children to express vigorously opinions based on nothing. Increased capacity to validate statements is a direct measure of growth in thinking and in language power.

7. Evidences of Growth in Critical Thinking

An interesting analysis of what constitutes growth in critical thinking is afforded by the series of questions set forth by Glaser (45) in his attempt to evaluate his own teaching of the process:

1. Does the child show increasing sensitivity to vague or ambiguous words or phrases and ask what they mean (awful, swell, radical, democratic, etc.)?
2. Does he tend to question the authority for a statement?
3. Does he require evidence in support of any conclusion he is asked to accept?
4. Does he distinguish facts from interpretation of facts or false inferences?
(For example, "According to the report of the National Resources Planning Board, 87 per cent of the families in the United States had an income of less than \$2,500 during the years 1935-36. *This proves that most people are too lazy or too stupid to earn more.*")
5. Does he see relationships between related facts and draw warranted generalizations?
6. Does he collect and organize facts into a coherent unit and show how his conclusion follows logically from those facts?
7. Does he consider negative as well as positive evidence on the question he is discussing?
8. Is he tolerant of new ideas and open to the consideration of new evidence?

Growth in these qualities is slow. Many adults fail to achieve them. Yet it is important that the teacher of children have them before her as desirable goals, from the days of the "'tis—'tain't" argument of the primary years to the more mature discussions of the upper grades.

8. Evidences of Growth in Sentence Structure

Evidences of the child's growth in power to think inhere also in his ability to express thought relationships clearly within a single sentence. A wealth of research in the sentences used by pupils of different age levels indicates with considerable clarity what are the positive elements of progress toward maturity in sentence structure (31, 44, 49, 50, 55, 67, 68 69):

1. A decrease in functionally complete but structurally incomplete sentences
2. Increased sense of sentence completeness as measured by the proportion of structurally complete and unified sentences
3. An increase in the length of sentences, revealing more sustained power of thinking and greater richness of mental content, particularly in expository writing
4. Greater variety in word order and construction in sentences, giving increased flexibility and interest to expression
5. Increased modification of ideas, indicative of enriched thinking and expression

6. Proper subordination of ideas, showing increased power in sensing relationships among them
7. Increased use of relational words such as connectives and prepositions, involving greater maturity in sensing relationships in space, time, and circumstance
8. Decrease in sentences beginning with *I* and centered upon self, indicative of a broadening social interest and the use of language to achieve useful social purposes

9. Sentence Sense—a Recurring Problem

The term, "sentence sense," implies the ability to recognize completeness in the expression of an idea. Since increasing complexity of ideas is a mark of growth, the problem of "sentence sense" remains a crucial one at every level of instruction from the preschool to the graduate school. There can be no such thing as "mastery of sentence sense" once and for all at any particular grade level. The child can learn only to express with completeness ideas of the complexity characteristic of his degree of maturity. The moment he advances in thought to more complex problems, he faces anew the achievement of a so-called "sentence sense."

For example, the infant, by tone, gesture, inflection, and posture, makes one word become a sentence. "Ball!" ejaculated with proper inflection and gesture means, without any doubt, "I want the ball." Socially, it gets results, and that is all he asks. The problem of the primary grades is to help the immature child to the complete expression of an idea, wherever such completeness is required by the situation in which he is speaking. A first-grade child, timid and immature, holds up a cut-out of a doll and says to the class, "Doll." "What do you want to tell us about the doll?" inquires the teacher encouragingly. The child finally, with considerable effort, announces, "I made this doll."

Telling a brief sequence of happenings or of facts leads to trouble with run-on sentences. "At the bottom there are three or four men," said a superior seven-year-old, "that keep it going and then they take the ropes that tie it up and there are little rings to tie it with and they get it up on the big pole going up" (3). Learning how many things he has to say and keeping each distinct from the other are real tasks for the primary child, but they are tasks which are important for him to attempt. Limiting the number of sentences he may say—a practice sometimes advocated—seems unwise, because it makes the *sentence* more important than the *idea* to be expressed. The question, is, how many sentences are required to express the idea or to relate the series of facts or events which the child is attempting to communicate.

Constant comparison between what the child reads and what he reports helps him to sense the concept of one idea separated from others by

an initial capital letter and a terminal mark of punctuation. It is the writer's way of showing where he would begin an idea and where he would pause before adding another, if he were talking instead of writing. The teacher, writing at the children's dictation, can do much to strengthen the child's grasp of completeness in sentences (62).

10. Other Evidences of Maturing Power in the Use of Sentences

From the primary grades on, increased maturity in thinking, paralleled by increased sentence length, variety, and subordination of ideas makes more complex the problem of sentence sense. Modification is, first of all, not a grammatical concept but a means of adding richness and specificity to the ideas being expressed. The first-grade child says, "I think our plant is going to have a flower on it." What kind of flower? Which plant? How soon? All these things may be added, thereby enriching and making more definite the idea. "I think our *geranium* plant will have a *red* flower on it *tomorrow*." "I think our *pretty green* geranium plant will have a *big red* flower on it *when we come to school tomorrow morning*."

In the middle grades a boy announces, "Come to our puppet show. It is about a blackbird." How much larger would be the audience if he had said, "Come and see our shadow puppets which Miss White, our art teacher, taught us how to make out of ordinary drawing paper and colored crayons. The show is about a saucy blackbird who learned to mind his own business."

The best means for developing greater richness of sentence content is to furnish greater richness of experience and then to set the stage for normal social sharing of it in language appropriate for the purpose. Recognition of a telling phrase here and an apt expression there in the work of individual pupils creates a desire on the part of all of them to find words more adequate to the idea to be expressed (6, 7, 15). Attention to effective expressions in materials read also stimulates the desire to produce similar effects in the children's own writing. For this purpose poems about the experiences the children themselves have had, together with more imaginative literary selections, are especially appropriate. Improving skeleton-like sentences in the pupils' own writing is valuable also when the material describes an experience which all the children have had in common. In that case, they are in a position to judge the adequacy of the words for the reproduction of the experience.

Variety in word order comes from flexibility in thought and expression. Satisfaction with the *sound* seems to be an important factor in the development of it. At any rate deaf children have much more difficulty in achieving it than have those who can hear (48). Some types of sentence order also make greater demands than others upon power of sustained

thinking—upon seeing the end of the sentence from the beginning. Instruction may dwell at all grade levels upon the interest involved in using different ways of saying the same thing, in not having all sentences begin and end exactly alike. In the primary grades the problem involves such simple differences as these:

There was a tiger walking around his cage at the zoo. There was a monkey hanging on a swing and jumping around. There was a polar bear splashing in the water.

in contrast to these:

There was a tiger walking around his cage at the zoo. A monkey was hanging on a swing and jumping around. Splashing in the water was a polar bear.

That variety in form of expression makes the story more interesting is obvious.

The Heiders (48) compared the sentence variety of older deaf and hearing children who reproduced the story of a moving picture about a boy who became ill after repeated visits to a forbidden fruit basket. The contrast in sentence structure is indicative of the difference between flexibility and lack of it in handling language forms.

Sentences of Deaf Children

His mother said that he could have a banana. She saw that he was sick. He thought he wanted another. When he finished eating the banana he wanted another. The boy had just finished the banana when his stomach began to hurt.

Sentences of Hearing Children

After he had eaten one, he went back to look in the window. While he was eating the third banana, he became sick. He sat on the porch while he ate it. He leaned against the post until his mother came out. As she was looking at him, her eye caught sight of the banana peels. Before he had finished, he began to feel sick. He ate one more before his stomach began to ache. As soon as he had finished one, he went back for another.

There is considerable indirect evidence that reading aloud and listening to one's own sentences and to those of others aid in recognition of sentence completeness and of variety in word order or construction.

11. Sensing Relationships in Thought

The most significant measure of maturity in sentence structure is ability to sense the relationship between main and subordinate ideas, as evidenced by the appropriate use of the complex sentence. Although children vary markedly in the age at which they begin to use complex sentences, use of this one construction is, in general, the best single criterion of maturity in expression (44, 55). Hence, the most fruitful attack upon

the problem is to develop in the classroom the kind of mental activity which will necessitate grappling with ideas and expressing relationships between them, rather than merely to assist the child in defining and recognizing complex sentences. The authors of *They All Want to Write (T)*, for example, make this comment about a sixth-grade child's account of how cigars are made in Cuba: "Of course, increased maturity also accounts in part for her use of more involved sentence structure: 'After the cigars are made, they are taken to a man who sorts them into piles according to their color'—a complex sentence with two dependent clauses was used naturally by a child *who understood the relationships existing before she tried to verbalize them.*"

Overemphasis upon the "elimination of *and*" in textbooks has led many children to consider it a "bad" word. They should be led to see that *and* is a very useful word to connect equal ideas. It continues the thought in the direction in which it has been going.

We went down town, saw a movie, *and* had some ice cream afterward.

We hurried out to the park, *and* there, in the branches of a tree, we found the lost hat, wet with rain.

Immature writers and thinkers connect by *and* ideas which are not equal, or which do not bear the relationship to one another of merely continuing the thought in the same direction. For example, a weak sixth-grade pupil wrote in a unit on industries near his school, "We went to the plant *and* we met a kind gentleman *and* he told us all about the products used there." The concise thinker would express the same experience by saying, "When we went to the plant, we met a kind gentleman who told us all about the products used there." His virtue lies not in the fact that he has eliminated *and*, but in his having seen the relationship among the ideas. One has been subordinated to *tell time* and the other, to *describe gentleman*.

Children should learn, therefore, as they grapple with the expression of ideas, that certain words show relationships between the different ideas to be expressed. They serve as sign-posts to the direction of the thought. For example, children often tease their mothers to let them go to a movie. What happens if she adds to her consent one of the following expressions?

Yes, you may go to the movie

(1) *and* you may have some ice cream afterward.

(2) *if* you earn the money.

(3) *after* you have done the dishes.

(4) *although* you don't deserve to because you haven't raked the lawn.

(5) *but* we can't buy a popgun if we spend the money that way.

And adds a new joy to the occasion; *but* puts an obstacle in the way. *If*, *after*, and *although* "modify" the mother's consent in such a way as to

"modify" or restrict the child's pleasure. Appreciation of these relationships in *thought* is much more important than ability to define grammatical constructions and has notably greater influence upon the development of correctness and exactness in expression (43).

The most useful recent data concerning the relationship of sentence sense and skill in the subordination of ideas to the growing maturity of elementary-school children come from Bear's analysis of the kinds of sentences written by 7,724 children in Grades I through VIII in the schools of St. Louis (31). The range in mental age of the children included in this study is from less than seven to more than sixteen years. The percentage of simple sentences decreases steadily with age, and the percentage of complex sentences increases. Progress in overcoming incomplete and run-on sentences is erratic, supporting the contention that problems of sentence sense remain with the child from year to year as greater complexity of ideas forces him to attempt increased complexity in sentence structure. From the ages of eleven to sixteen there is little change in the percentage of incomplete statements. During the years from nine to thirteen, when the burden of facts and ideas increases rapidly in the intermediate and upper grades, the number of run-on sentences actually increases rather than decreases, and even at the sixteen-year level it is greater than at seven years.

The Heiders' data (48) for eight hundred children in the schools of Pennsylvania show a similarly regular increase in use of the complex sentence between the ages of eight and fourteen. La Brant's figures (55) for Grades IV-IX and IX-XII in a Missouri school system parallel closely those of Bear. Her high-school students used subordinate clauses in 36 per cent of their sentences, and her adults, in 46 per cent.

All studies indicate that sentences involving *time* relationships are easiest for children to master, especially those beginning with *when* (44, 48, 55). Such differentiating time-words as *after*, *as*, *until*, *before*, and *while* come with increasing maturity. Sentences containing noun clauses commonly used as objects cause little trouble, probably because they follow the normal sentence order of subject, verb, and object, and therefore make less demand upon sustained thinking. Clauses of cause, condition, and concession appear late because they involve relationships necessitating logical thinking of a more difficult type. Frogner's study (44) indicates that noun clauses, being a part of the subject-verb-object structure of the sentence, are practically never written as fragments. Adjective clauses seldom are. The adverbial clause, however, presents a real problem, being written as a fragment six times as often as the adjective and thirty-nine times as often as the noun clause. Emphasis upon the relationship in thought illustrated by the sentence, "Yes, you may go to

the movies *if after although*," and the like, becomes particularly pertinent at this point. As the pupil grows in power to subordinate ideas and build up modifiers, the problem of sentence sense becomes more acute.

IV. LANGUAGE AS A SOCIAL INSTRUMENT

1. Interaction of Minds and of Personalities Is Basic to Instruction in the Language Arts

From early infancy language is a social instrument. Progress in its use parallels the young child's emergence from a self-centered to a social being. As soon as he becomes conscious of others, he begins the long process of communicating his wants and his attitudes through language. Early in his association with parents and with other children, he asserts himself by displaying his powers; he commands, he requests, or he contradicts. The satisfaction he finds in such communication is directly associated with his ability to adjust himself to similar activities on the part of others. He may go so far and no further without objection from his associates. He must not only have words to express ideas, but he must play the game of communication according to the rules. He must use words so as to make his meaning as clear to someone else as it is to himself. He must learn courtesy and consideration. He must know how certain words affect others. He must develop power to think and act co-operatively, and he must understand the necessity for accuracy and precision in the business of communicating ideas through language. Interaction of minds and of personalities is basic to any program in the development of language. Language cannot grow in a vacuum; nor can it be learned through merely filling in blanks in a drill book or giving "oral talks."

Progress in the socialization of the child through language is a significant measure of success in the language arts. Students of the preschool pupil watch eagerly his progress from (1) egocentric speech in which he talks to himself, through (2) parallel speech, in which several children, playing in the company of one another, chatter simultaneously without thought of a listener or expectation of response, to (3) socialized speech, in which they communicate with one another, relate happenings, tell each other what to do and what not to do, and ask and answer questions (37, 38, 40, 59, 60, 64, 65).

American and European scholars differ in their conclusions concerning the proportion of egocentric and socialized speech in which children engage at different levels, but they are all agreed that maturity in language development is measured by the child's ability to think and communicate socially with others; that is, his interest and ability in addressing a listener, sharing meaning, and considering another's point of view. One concrete evi-

dence of such socialization in the early years is the reduction in the use of the pronoun *I* in the speech of little children and the parallel increase in the use of *we*, *you*, *it* and *they* (54, 60). Goodenough (46) discovered an increase in use of the pronoun *I* in connection with the need for self-assertion, when children were playing with others of their own age; and an increase in the use of the pronouns *it* and *they*, as the children associated with adults, to whom they addressed constantly such questions as "What is it?" and "Why do they do that?"

Clearly the child's use of language is a direct reflection not only of his background of experience with the world about him but of his social relationships. A major responsibility, therefore, of the teacher of the language arts in the elementary school is to organize the activities of the school day in such a way as to provide the child with all possible social contacts. Sitting in straight rows and giving and listening to "oral talks" will never provide the social experience necessary for well-rounded development in the use of language.

2. Dramatic Play versus Dramatization

The stages children pass through in dramatic play are an interesting indication of the same process of development. As Goodrich (10) points out, children early explore their surroundings, identify themselves with them by make-believe performances in which they are being a "bee," a "lion," a "fireman," a "mother," or some character in a much-loved story, acting out alone the things that interest them in their environment. Both clarification of experience and power of expression grow in the process. Oftentimes an adult, entering into the game, can greatly enhance the child's stock of words. Recently, a father, warding off excessive playing at shooting Japs, started a hunt for wild animals in Africa. Every time the cork gun went off, the child demanded, "What did I hit that time, Daddy?" The small boy's enthusiasm continued so long that his father's list of wild animals proved too limited for the needs of the occasion. "A horse, maybe," he replied with some hesitation. "Naw, Daddy!" the child remonstrated, "*Wild stuff!*"

Entrance into school commonly brings a new stage into dramatic play. The child shifts from individualistic impersonation to playing with a group. Together they play house, store, America-First processions, or war. Different children assume different parts. One is the storekeeper; another, the purchaser. One runs the hook-and-ladder, another attaches the hose, and still another is the clanging fire bell. Activities of this sort help children to adjust to others and to co-operate in an enterprise in which all have a common interest. Spontaneity in such play is all-important. The teacher, standing by and observing, can learn much about the

quality of living in the children's background as well as about their habits in the use of language.

Ultimately, dramatization supplants dramatic play in the child's experience. Children plan together the acting out of a story they have enjoyed, an experience they have had together, a culminating presentation of what they have learned in a unit, or a make-believe story which perhaps aids the cause of safety or gives opportunity for an expression of love of country. If growth in language power is the objective, teachers will be careful to let the ideas presented and the words said be the children's own and not those of some stilted play prepared in advance by an adult. The development of individual personalities, the process of group planning, and the effort at clarification and effective expression of an idea are much more important than is the finished product.

3. Organization of Socially Significant Enterprises

Obviously, the socialization of the child through such activities in the elementary school depends in large measure upon the social organization of the happenings in the classroom. Unless children have practice in co-operative undertakings in which group planning and individual and group responsibility for carrying out the plans are present, growth in these social aspects of language cannot be expected to take place. For example, children in a sixth grade in Los Angeles (19) planned an assembly program for Pan-American Day to promote understanding and a feeling of good will between the two Americas. Much discussion ensued as to what form the program should take. Reading had to be done to discover what kinds of information should be presented. The librarian was consulted as to what good books about South America were in the library. Individuals assumed tasks for which they were particularly suited. One boy interviewed the director of a Mexican orchestra for suggestions as to music. A girl undertook responsibility for locating pictures of costumes at the public library. A committee investigated the number of Mexicans in the community and the best way to study their life in Los Angeles. As the plans progressed and the program took form, the teacher had the opportunity of teaching directly in connection with their use in the enterprise the proper forms of practically every important aspect of the language program. The children had constant oral discussion as a group and in committees. They recorded plans from day to day. They used the library, took notes, and organized reports. They read literature, both poetry and prose. They wrote poems and a play of their own. They interviewed others. They wrote and received letters. They made announcements. They invited and received guests. And throughout the entire enterprise, as they talked and planned and worked together, they set up

standards for their own achievement of language skills in a situation involving the interaction of minds and personalities.

4. Need for a Sense of Social Security in the Classroom

Besides the carrying on of a socially valuable enterprise, progress in the use of language demands within the classroom an atmosphere of friendly helpfulness and of co-operative striving toward a goal. The timid child must feel that he is among friends who believe in him. The inexpressive child must have his confidence established and his interests aroused (2, 16). The one whose speech is full of errors must know that *he* personally is accepted as he is; that his classmates respect him for those things which he can do better than he can speak English; that they and his teacher are there to help him overcome the handicaps of his language because of the worth of the contribution he can make to the social group by such improvement in the use of English. The gifted child must have an opportunity to use his powers in the interests of the group, always with a feeling of responsibility for giving others a helping hand and a chance to explore their own possibilities. A feeling of security in the social group and a sense of the value of better expression for promoting the undertaking in hand are basic to improvement in the children's use of English.

Mabie's study (58) of the language problems of the intermediate grades in Madison revealed two as creating difficulties far beyond those of correct usage in grammar or punctuation: (1) fear of saying anything at all, and (2) the desire to talk all of the time without having anything to say. The best antidote for both these difficulties is developing wholesome, vital co-operative enterprises in the classroom, which will utilize the varied talents of the pupils, give them a sense of responsibility to the group for a high level of performance, and foster co-operation so absorbing as to counteract self-consciousness on the part of both the timid and the aggressive. Coupled with this, recognizing the children's successes, using their own best performance as a goal for continued effort, and striving for social goals to be achieved through use of language are fundamental to the process of growth.

5. Human Relationships and the Tone of Language

In a recent issue of the *Elementary English Review* devoted to world-mindedness, Margaret Schlauch (29) speaks of contrasts between polite, courtly languages and simple, brusque ones as possible sources of misunderstanding in intercourse between peoples of different nations. For example, our own language is quite lacking in "the polite amenities and formalities which come naturally to persons speaking Spanish. . . . It avoids formal expressions like 'If the gentlemen will have the goodness to

enter. . . .’ We say abruptly, ‘Do come in!’ This may sound like an insult to Hispanic ears.” If we were to master the gracious forms of the Spanish tongue, Miss Schlauch points out, in so doing we should “be gaining *psychological understanding* [*italics mine*] as well as a new language.”

Chiefly through observations of behavior in response to crudities and courtesies of language can children become conscious of the meaning of such psychological understanding among their own associates. Often, without any intention of being rude or crude, children alienate their listeners or their readers by unconscious crudities of expression. Fitzgerald (41) noted the tendency in the letters of children in the fourth grade through the sixth. “Mother says I can have you over,” they write, putting the favor on the wrong side of the fence; or “I don’t know what else to do today, so I guess I’ll write to you”; or “We need your two baseball bats for our Field Day,” without even so much as a “please”; or, to the principal, “This is to tell you that we want to go on an excursion next Tuesday morning if you will let us.” The way in which a request is worded may engender hostility or enhance the chances of its being granted. Sensitiveness to such nuances in language is a mark of growing social experience.

6. Social Amenities in the Language Program

The ease with which children greet visitors, play host or hostess, introduce friends or speakers, and interview strangers is a further measure of their maturity in the social aspects of language. It depends upon their stage of social development as well as upon their facility in the use of words and is a clearly recognized measure of growth in the language arts. These are special occasions in the experiences of children. Courtesy and tact in daily associations in the classroom are equally important. If the activities going on are truly social in nature, both teacher and pupils will have abundant opportunity to practice the appropriate outward expression of an inner spirit of courtesy.

7. Human Relationships and the Connotation of Words

In this connection, also, growth in appreciation of the connotations which different words have for different people is fundamentally important among the social uses of language. Recently the two following remarks were made in the presence of the writer in totally different contexts:

You say you are a Republican; and yet you seem to be interested in the best education for all of the children of all of the people.

The parents in our district are, for the most part, “laboring people”; and yet they really seem sincerely interested in having the best for their children.

Both remarks indicate how the attitude and background of the speaker have read into the word, *Republican*, and into the expression, *laboring people*, specific connotations peculiar to himself. The question of the "referents" which a given word has for speaker or listener and the importance of precision in defining terms is amply discussed in another section of this yearbook. Its important connection with the pattern of the child's growth in language is patent (9, 14, 18, 26).

8. Community of Understanding and of Action through Language

Perhaps language makes its greatest contribution as a social instrument in welding together a group through community of purpose and of understanding. Biber and others (3:148) observing the noon-time luncheon conversations of seven-year-olds in a New York school, tell a fascinating story of how the children used a show of hands in voting to develop group feeling and a sense of unity in their own childish world. "Voting against Hitler was their concert number!" Feeling and expressing a homogeneous reaction gave them peculiar satisfaction as a group. In connection with it, they developed a scale of expression, a gesture language of their own. "Raising three fingers signified more dislike than raising two fingers. Putting hands way down low under the table meant serious disapproval. A gesture with curled, relaxed fingers was not taken to be as definitely disapproving as stiff, extended ones. . . . This became their culture pattern," say the writers, "not a pattern of attitudes, opinions, or class differences, but an action pattern, a social structure, built in part around a communal bag-of-tricks."

In the intermediate and upper grades, children should have many opportunities for thus thinking together and for developing a similar homogeneity of feeling through the more mature use of appropriate language symbols. Following Pearl Harbor, some twenty leaders of the National Council of Teachers of English came together to discuss the role of the English teacher in wartime. They appeared, each with his mind made up and a list of proposals to present. As the two days of discussion progressed, a great variety of suggestions came from representatives of widely different sections of the country. Evidences of new stimulation appeared in the faces of men and women who thought they had themselves exhausted the possibilities of the subject. When the final composite report was read by the secretary, combining into one integrated statement the best thinking of the individuals of the group, the committee burst into spontaneous applause. *What they had created together* was so much bigger than what any one person had thought of alone! Children have a right to that thrill as they work together on significant problems in the elementary school. Moreover, language, when used to clarify thinking,

and to weld together groups in the planning and carrying out of important community undertakings, is a supremely important instrument of the democratic way of life.

9. The Importance of Specific Teaching of Language Functions in Use

It is not enough that children should have an opportunity merely to use language in the course of carrying on activities in the classroom. They must be taught specific methods of procedure—how to make a report, what to do in interviewing, in what form to write a letter, and the like. They must have conscious standards of performance toward which they direct their efforts, for by means of such standards they gain a sense of security in expressing themselves. They must be able to evaluate their own progress. They must have special help and additional practice on those skills in which they prove to be weak, and they must leave the undertaking with *a sense of the importance of adequate use of language* in carrying out useful social enterprises. Mere hit-and-miss practice may serve only to fix errors or to encourage slovenly habits of work. Growth in power demands that both teacher and pupils be constantly on the alert to note the extent to which added power in the use of language is actually developed in the course of the enterprise.

10. Evidences of Growth in Certain Aspects of Language

No objective measures are available to identify evidences of increasing maturity in carrying on the important language functions of everyday life. There are no proved standards to be reached by all children at any particular level of instruction. The best one can do is to define, on the basis of descriptions of performance at different levels and of recommendations in textbooks and in courses of study, the direction of growth in some of the most significant aspects of language. For the purpose of illustration, four will serve: (a) conversation, (b) group discussion, (c) relating a personal experience, and (d) creative writing of an imaginative sort.

a. Growth in Power to Carry On Conversation. Goodrich (10) proposes the following outcomes of conversation in the primary grades:

- A. Outcomes related primarily to conversation carried on informally without obvious direction
 1. Habit of conversing naturally with the teacher and other associates
 2. Habit of keeping language natural and spontaneous
 3. Approval of school as a place where language is used to promote pleasure and where conversation is truly enjoyed
 4. Habit of adapting the voice to suit the occasion
 5. Beginning of discrimination in selecting the proper time to talk

- B. Outcomes primarily relating to conversation carried on with more obvious direction
 - 1. Pleasure in conversing with the teacher and members of the group about personal experiences and pleasures
 - 2. Habit of selecting and talking about personal experiences which are of interest to others
 - 3. Beginning of ability to keep to the subject of conversation
 - 4. Habit of adapting the voice to the size of the group
 - 5. Habit of enunciating clearly
 - 6. Habit of adapting the body to the needs of the occasion
 - 7. Increasing consideration for the rights of others, shown through (a) taking turns in talking, (b) listening intelligently, and (c) not monopolizing the conversation
 - 8. Aural sensitiveness, on the part of those who misuse them, to the correct forms listed for the first grade

McBroom (20) offers these objectives for the middle grades:

- A. Have something to talk about.
- B. Observe common courtesies.
 - 1. Be agreeable.
 - 2. Express likes and dislikes with moderation.
 - 3. Differ with another's view tactfully.
 - 4. Avoid completing another's statement or monopolizing the conversation.
 - 5. Know how to interrupt and when.
 - 6. Never knowingly say something to injure another.
- C. Use correct speech technique.
- D. Have a pleasing vocabulary.
- E. Be a good listener.
 - 1. Show interest in what is said.
 - 2. Be sure you understand; if not, ask questions frankly.
 - 3. Ask occasional pertinent questions.
 - 4. Show a sympathetic attitude toward the speaker.
- F. Change tactfully the topic of conversation when it is unpleasant.
- G. Talk without the use of mannerisms.
- H. Know where and how to get interesting conversational material.
- I. Know what topics are appropriate to what occasions.
- J. Know when and where it is not appropriate to talk.
- K. Be enthusiastic during a conversation.

Hatfield and others (13) suggest these standards of performance for the upper grades:

- A. Has my conversation seemed to interest others?
- B. Have I encouraged others to talk by listening attentively?
- C. Have I spoken only what I know or believe to be true?
- D. Have I avoided impolite interruptions?
- E. Have I refrained from laughing at the embarrassment of others?

- F. Have I been courteous even in disagreements?
- G. Have I occasionally acted as leader of the conversation?
- H. Have I spoken in a pleasant, conversational voice?

Borchers (4), writing in the field of speech for seventh- and eighth-grade pupils, names five imperatives of good conversation:

- A. Have something to say.
- B. Know human nature.
- C. Have an expressive body and an expressive voice.
- D. Be a good listener and encourage others to speak.
- E. Be courteous.

Evidences of growth are discernible in these standards. The main emphasis of the primary grades is on helping the child to feel at home in the natural atmosphere of informal conversation and to give him a desire to participate. After that, the teacher introduces the *beginnings* of adapting the voice to the size of the group, clarifying enunciation, knowing when to talk, being willing to take turns, selecting something interesting to tell, sticking to the subject, and listening with courtesy to others.

In the intermediate grades these beginnings receive further attention. Courtesy is defined in terms of interruptions, what to do in case of disagreement, and what it means to consider the feelings of others. Listening is defined in terms of showing interest in the subject and courtesy to the speaker, achieving understanding, questioning the speaker intelligently, and being willing to be convinced or informed by others. Speaking becomes more conscious and avoidance of mannerisms is attacked directly. Richness and appropriateness of vocabulary are emphasized, and the occasions and subjects for conversation are extended.

In the upper grades, all of these desirable outcomes continue to receive attention, but emphasis is on the interplay of minds, group consciousness, and courtesy in the face of disagreement. Avoidance of mannerisms gives way to positive standards of the expressive voice and body. Encouragement of others comes to the fore; also, training for leadership, and a sense of responsibility for the validity of one's remarks.

In spite of the fact that all of these aspects of growth are functioning at every level of instruction, the complexity of the problems at each successive level of development operate to differentiate the emphases of instruction from one level to the next. That does not mean, however, that individual children may not vary tremendously within each level in the adequacy with which they can meet the standards set.

b. Group Discussion. Goodrich (10), in her analysis of conversation, makes a distinction between informal conversation carried on with or without obvious direction and conversation carried on more formally in class or group discussion. The latter is pointed toward a specific topic,

and definite communal agreements are expected. She lists the following as the five outcomes of group discussion in the primary grades:

1. Beginning habit of participating in group discussion and a beginning ability to make suitable contributions to it
2. Feeling of responsibility for helping to solve group problems
3. Ability to discriminate between intelligent and unnecessary questions
4. Beginning ability to determine through group discussion the desirable steps in an undertaking
5. Habit of expressing opinions honestly and fearlessly with due consideration for others

Biber and others (3) noted a distinct difference among seven-year-olds between the spontaneous, uncontrolled conversations of the lunch table and the group discussions directed by the teacher. These discussions at the primary level "furnished opportunity for reviewing experiences the children had had together, talking over what they had seen, asking questions, sharing with each other the more personal experiences of the week end, the summer, or the evenings at home. The teacher used this opportunity to present information or to carry the children's inquiry on to the next step."

"A selective process," they point out, "underlies the contributions to any discussion. The children who take part actively select from their total recalls, the facts, the incidents, the ideas which seem fitting to the subject matter." In the second grade, however, the discussion necessarily resembles an "experience meeting" more than a meeting of minds on a central issue. "The structure of the discussions is a highly mobile one, shuttling between general questions and personal experiences. The major topics set for discussion only have sporadic influence on the pattern of control. The children do not wander too far afield from the subjects being discussed, but the structure of the discussions tends to follow sub-themes which are offshoots from the main thread so that the sequence of the whole is anything but logical. These subthemes are of various kinds, usually feeding into the children's inclinations to recount personal, direct, exciting experience."

It is interesting to note in this connection Mabie's evidence (57) that the extent to which there is a meeting of minds, an interchange of ideas and of information as contrasted with "lone-star" performances, such as monologues dealing with the child's own activity, depends to a large extent upon the nature of the project under way. Where children merely "give talks," the lone-star performance predominates. Where a common enterprise is being carried on, the give-and-take of discussion and the ultimate sifting and application of ideas and of information become inevitable.

Jenkins (16), in discussing what she defines as stages in the child's growth, characterizes the gradual development of a sense of audience and increased power of sustained thinking as significant in the early middle years. Such development, she believes, is further enhanced by the widening of experience through reading in Grades V and VI. Baker (30), as he studied the contributions of children to general class discussion in Grades II, IV, and VI in three New York schools of varying socioeconomic levels, found clear evidences of growth in (1) increased use of material from vicarious sources, (2) greater reliance on the results of the children's own thinking, (3) greater concern for the remote as contrasted with the immediate in both time and place, and (4) increased evidence of association of ideas in a real "meeting of minds." Increased maturity was also indicated by the type of topics selected for discussion. The favorite subjects of second-grade pupils were animals, games and play, and home and family life. Those of the fourth-grade pupils broadened and became less personal—trips, books, moving pictures, and metropolitan happenings. At the sixth-grade level, children discussed national and world events as well as metropolitan happenings.

In Baker's experiment the problem of distributing participation among various children in the class proved a baffling one (30, 53). So also did the development of a sense of responsibility concerning the validity of one's contribution to group discussion. The three most avid talkers in the classes used in one experiment contributed a large proportion of all that was said. The amount contributed by the most loquacious children in each group was equal to the combined contributions of from five to fourteen of the least loquacious—a ratio which was independent of the size of class. More significant still was the evidence that the amount each pupil contributed bore little relationship to his actual knowledge of the subject. When the discussion dealt with matters of fact rather than with matters of opinion, some of the most loquacious were forced to subside for the moment but "would strive lustily to divert the discussion into more general topics or into special areas with which they happened to be familiar."

Readiness of response is often characteristic of those who have least to say. Recognition of the need to listen longer and more carefully, to let one's response indicate that one has turned over in one's mind the ideas of others is a mark of increasing maturity in participation in group discussion (16). Stimulating the child's sense of responsibility to the group for making a worth-while, authentic contribution to class discussion is fundamental to his progress in the language arts in the intermediate and upper grades.

c. Sharing Personal Experiences through Telling Stories or Anecdotes. Intimate, personal writing and speaking have been ignored thus far in the discussion. The effort to define stages of growth in the relating of personal experiences or in the telling of stories results in artificialities and unreal distinctions, as is the case with most phases of language development. McKee (21) suggests emphasis in the first grade upon (1) knowing what one is going to say, (2) developing a natural relationship with the group, and (3) speaking clearly at a reasonable tempo and with appropriate volume. In the second grade he urges closer scrutiny of usage, enunciation, and excessive use of *and*. By the time a child reaches third or fourth grade he is ready for constructive teaching of selection and organization of material, the advantages of omitting unimportant details, the importance of having an interesting beginning and ending, and the value of variety in tone. Finally, in Grades V and VI, he is concerned with the general spirit of the story and the use of telling words. While the problem of distributing responsibility for differing emphases in different grades of the elementary school demands some such agreement upon placement of topics, it becomes obvious that all of the things mentioned in the analysis are important at all levels of instruction.

Growth in ability to relate one's experiences interestingly is measured in terms of (1) the ease and pleasure with which pupils share their experiences; (2) their power to select what will interest the listener; (3) their own vivid recollection of the experience—seeing it, feeling it vitally, so that they are in a position to re-create it for others; (4) their capacity to tell it well from the point of view of economical relating of events in the order of happening or with a sense of plot, withholding something to create a dramatic effect in the end; and (5) their felicity in the use of concrete, picture-making words which will reproduce the experience effectively.

d. Creative Writing. Where everyday writing ends and creative writing begins is difficult to say, for a touch of imagination or a feeling for the concrete in diction improves the most ordinary communication. Yet there is a place in the elementary school for writing for sheer fun, for trying one's hand at telling stories or writing poems, or expressing one's innermost feelings or fancies with or without thought of a reader, as the case may be. The work of Heffernan (15), of Cole (6), and of Ferebee and others (7) shows clearly how some teachers have succeeded in developing such powers. The technique of doing it is difficult to define. Certainly, it involves recognition of individuality and of freedom to express one's *own* thoughts and emotions. It requires the stimulation of accuracy in observation, and of that imaginative interpretation of experience which alone

makes the experience distinctly one's own. Since creative writing demands strong sense perception as a basis for the play of feeling and of imagination, and a sensitiveness to the rhythm, the pictorial power, and the suggestiveness of words in conveying the experience to others, much reading of a kind which demonstrates these qualities is a part of every successful training program in creative expression.

The authors of *They All Want To Write* (7) go far beyond the mere sharing of personal experience into the realm of creative composition, believing that the child's complete absorption in the creation of the story or the poem not only helps him to discover the design best adapted to his theme, but also has an important effect upon his own personality:

When children write with the definite idea of enlisting the attention of an audience from the beginning to the end of an engaging tale, they learn in time to select that which gives vigor and spirit to their writing. To hold even a tolerant and friendly audience in gratifying suspense, a writer must really tell a story. Beginning with a propelling idea or suggestion, implying just enough probability of outcome to start the listeners' curiosity, opening several possible ways of working out a solution, holding the suspense to the very end—these and other elements are found by actual, personal trial to be effective techniques of story construction. Design thus emerges from the same storyteller-to-audience situations that have been the beginnings of our literary heritage.

Everyone who has experimented with children's creative enterprises has been amazed and deeply gratified to see the tremendous energy, concentration, and the electric atmosphere which characterizes such activity. This absorption with an idea, a dance, a picture, a story, a play, is too important an aspect of child life to be treated lightly. An activity that so genuinely engages the whole person and either thrills him with his success and prowess or irritates him with his failure leaves almost visible changes in that person, who for a while has lost himself in his adventure. . . . Those who have seen energy kindled and honest pride effected by creative effort have seen also a new and stronger person quicken into being.

Someday perhaps the procedure will be defined specifically enough for the average teacher to follow it. The evidence of growth on the part of children remains to be gathered. It is worth the effort. The authors of the book cited (7) present the work of the same seven children over a period of six years—the only such evidence in print, so far as the writer can determine; but the materials vary so greatly in form and in theme that it is impossible to study them in detail in relationship to each other. The most important contribution that could be made to the teaching of the language arts at the present time would be to keep permanent records of the writing of the same children over a period of years in sufficient numbers to reveal the manner in which children make progress in different types of expression.

V. SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Elimination of Errors as a Factor in Growth

Positive elements of growth in control over language have been given major stress in the discussions of this chapter because they are so frequently lost sight of in a wholesale attack upon errors or in a piecemeal study of specific responses in tests composed for the most part of discrete sentences. Nevertheless, elimination of errors is an important element in the child's growth in language.

2. Recognizing the Social Importance of Prescribed Conventions

Since language is a social instrument, its use is dictated by certain very definitely prescribed conventions. The sooner the child discovers the social value of correct usage and the desirability of overcoming his errors, the better will be his progress, and the happier he will be in his efforts to improve. Once he understands that matters of usage are important to the ease and effectiveness with which he can do business through language, half the battle is won. Teachers who are wise, therefore, place children as often as possible in situations where correct usage matters greatly to their sense of accomplishment and their sense of pride. Mimeographing a newspaper or magazine for distribution to school or community, interviewing a business man or an official for information, making an announcement, or writing a letter actually to be sent—all these help boys and girls to appreciate the importance of correctness and to desire to improve their own use of language.

3. Elimination of Errors as an Individual Matter

Next in importance to generating a desire to speak correctly is recognizing the fact that errors are, for the most part, individual. Guiler (47) found, for example, that progress in the elimination of errors in a class where instruction was individualized was greatly superior to that in a class where all pupils progressed through the textbook at the same rate. Growth is achieved by means of a motivated attack by the individual child upon the errors which he himself makes. Studies of error, such as those of Bear (31) and Wheeler (72), indicate clearly that errors of the same kind are made by different individuals in every grade in the elementary school. They indicate also that some children who come from homes where they hear only correct English spoken achieve a high degree of mastery of English forms by the time they enter the first grade. Such children obviously do not need continued drill upon points imperative for others who come from homes where faulty habits of usage have been instilled into them from infancy.

4. Proved Methods of Attack upon Errors

Research (35, 69) indicates that two methods of attack produce better results than any others. One is placing both the right and the wrong form before the child so that he makes a conscious choice of the right in terms of some guiding principle or example which has been furnished him; in other words, so that a problem is presented to him for solution. The other is to give him *oral* practice in the use of the right form which he has chosen so that the correct expression will come to sound right to him. One reason for the comparative ineffectiveness of mere blank-filling in English is that the procedure ignores *sound*, which is the most potent factor in improving usage. The chief antidote for hearing a wrong form frequently at home is hearing the right form frequently at school.

5. The Importance of Natural Situations for the Use of Language

Growth in usage is conditioned by more than knowledge of the correct form or the ability to underline it in a sentence. The teacher should, therefore, base her remedial work on observation of the child's spontaneous use of language in natural situations where his attention is on *what* he is saying rather than on *how* he is saying it. Absorbing discussion of vital personal experiences produces such results. Talk of a bear's love of honey started a first-grade class one day to telling yarns (an obvious mixture of fact and fancy) of the time when each child was stung by a bee. There was a notable difference between the language used during that part of the lesson and the language of the formal question-and-answer exercises which preceded it. One day the writer observed two comparatively similar sixth-grade classes in the same school. In one, the children stood properly with hands at their sides and gave oral talks which had been carefully prepared in advance. Scarcely a mistake in usage occurred during the entire hour. In the other, children were showing each other things they had made and were explaining how they had made them. A boy twisted a model airplane from side to side, explaining each part in detail to the class. Numerous interesting questions followed his talk, and considerable give-and-take in discussion occurred. The speech of the children was full of errors. The second teacher had a real measure of the natural speech she was trying to improve. The first had an artificially controlled product.

6. Determining Causes of Error as a Means to Economy in Growth

If a teacher would help a child eliminate errors from his speech or writing, he should determine as accurately as possible the causes of the child's mistakes and attack those causes directly. For example, children rarely

make mistakes in the forms of pronouns except where they occur in compounds. They say, "My mother read me a story." But they frequently slip when the wording includes another, "My mother read John and I a story." The same boy who says, "I went fishing," will as likely as not announce, "Jimmy and me went fishing." The test is to say what you would say if you were speaking of yourself alone. Drills using sentences involving the speaker alone are useless in the elimination of this type of error. Pronouns used as predicate pronouns do not, of course, present this particular problem.

Another clue to the best attack upon mistakes is to study the ways in which the peculiarities of the English language cause trouble for children. For example, the high frequency of errors in agreement in the English language is occasioned partly by the fact that except for the present-tense forms of the verb *to be* and the irregular *you were* in the singular, English verbs commonly do not agree with their subjects in anything. (29) I love, you love, *he loves*, we love, you love, they love. I loved, you loved, he loved, we loved, you loved, they loved. The same thing happens with irregular verbs like *sing*, *come*, or *go*. The only point at which an English verb, according to present-day usage, changes form to agree with its subject is in the third person singular, again excepting the present tense of the verb *to be* and the irregular *you were* in the singular. In the third person singular of the present, the verb adds an *s* to refer to *one* as contrasted with *more than one*. The first language fact that a little child becomes conscious of is that "s" at the end of a word means more than one—*dog*, *dogs*; *house*, *houses*; *ball*, *balls*. Some students graduate from college without discovering that the opposite is true of verbs. The futility of conjugating verbs in English is obvious. Going to the crux of the problem of agreement is the only answer to the elimination of error in that point of usage. It is interesting that children struggle to generalize for themselves on the basis of their own observation of language. The "ed" as a sign of past time is recognized early and often leads to such natural errors as *comed* and *writed*. One boy wanted his seat *highered* when another had his *lowered*, and a small girl reported losing a "downer" tooth, not an "upper" one. Usage is often illogical, and children need help in determining the situations in which certain patterns of language actually obtain.

Besides such psychological causes of error, there are social causes. The influence of the environment upon children's usage far outweighs the effect of school instruction. As has been pointed out earlier, constant hearing of such forms as *hadn't ought*, *he done it*, and the like, results in making them *sound* right to the child. Emphasis upon *sound*, *listening* for the correct or incorrect form, is essential to progress in the elimination of

such errors. Paul (25) believes parents and the community may be persuaded at times to assist with the problem. Where possible, it is worth the effort to stimulate such co-operation. At other times it is out of the question.

7. Recognizing Varying Social Standards in Language

Teachers in communities where problems of usage are acute will do well to recognize that correct usage is only one factor in growth in control over language and not stress it to the neglect of other elements more vital to the child in his relationship to his community. Linguists recognize clearly that different levels of English exist throughout our country and between social strata and that an excess of zeal for lifting certain children above the level of their environment in matters of usage may interfere with their chances of having mutually helpful relations with their communities (42, 56, 61).

Fries (42), Marckwardt (61), and Leonard (56) propose that children whose level of usage throughout life will be informal should not be required by their teachers to adhere to formal standards of English in such expressions as *It is I* for *It is me*, or *We arose* for *We got up*, or *Everyone . . . he* instead of *Everyone . . . they*. O'Rourke's nation-wide survey (63) revealed the fact that at the end of the eighth grade pupils had achieved 30.9 per cent mastery of niceties of expression, such as the distinction between *eager* and *anxious*; 15.5 per cent mastery of least important distinctions, such as *They divided the money among them*, as opposed to *They divided up the money among them*; and 44.7 per cent mastery of those forms of language, misuse of which brands a person as illiterate. Growth for the superior child may mean progress from mere literacy to mastery of the niceties of expression, but growth for the child with a serious linguistic handicap depends on mastery of the literacies of expression first. Marckwardt and Walcott (61), in their extension of the earlier study of Leonard (56), indicate what these illiteracies are. *The Experience Curriculum* of the National Council of Teachers of English also lists the basic errors from research in the field (23).

8. Growth in Matters of Literacy

The study made by Charters (34) in 1916 has never been superseded so far as the basic list of errors is concerned. Forty per cent of all the errors made by the children in his study were in the forms of fifteen common verbs, chiefly the confusion of the past with the past participle: *see, come, run, write, begin, break, drink, lie, do, go, give, take, ring, sing, sit*.

It is obvious from this list of verbs that progress in mastery of English

usage is not sequential, as progress in skills in arithmetic may be. When the child comes to school, he is using all these verbs correctly or incorrectly. We cannot say that he will practice some of them in the first grade, others in the second, and so on, for he is already finding daily use for all of them. We can group them only in order of frequency of use, cruciality of error in terms of accepted standards, and difficulty of mastery. We have some evidence, although it is not conclusive, on these three points. The verbs *see*, *do*, *come*, and *go* lead in frequency of use (52, 70) and in cruciality of error (56, 61). They will probably be attacked first. Perhaps *run*, *give*, *write*, and *take* are close seconds. At least all of them appear in the first five hundred words in frequency of use in both Horn's writing vocabulary (52) and Thorndike's list of twenty thousand words most frequently used in reading (70). We know that *lie* and *sit* are reserved for years of greater maturity, both by reason of difficulty and because they are less crucial in the total range of errors.

9. Punctuation and Thinking

Punctuation and capitalization are matters of courtesy to help make the meaning clearer to the reader. Growth in these skills must be expected to parallel growth in sensing relationships between ideas and in capacity for modifying and enriching the thought. No amount of punctuation can clarify what has not been clearly thought out and expressed in the beginning. In fact, the best way to correct a sentence faulty in either usage or punctuation is often to re-word the statement, making its meaning clear. We have already shown that recognition of the sentence as a statement complete in itself is a problem which varies from year to year with the complexity of the thoughts to be expressed. Appreciation of the period, the question mark, or the exclamation point at the end of a sentence comes first through the consciousness of what these marks tell the beginner to do with his voice as he reads. As he grasps the meaning, he understands the purpose of the punctuation; and as he understands the purpose of the punctuation, he more readily grasps the meaning.

Milligan (62) found that, as a result of having their attention directed to punctuation marks in what they read and in what the teacher wrote at their dictation, the majority of second-grade children could name and give the reason for the period or the question mark at the end of a sentence and for the capital letter in the names of persons and places, at the beginning of a sentence, and for the pronoun *I*. Many of them also knew the apostrophe in contractions, the period after abbreviations, and capital letters in a title.

10. The Purposes of Punctuation

Apart from the heading of letters, in which the comma usually indicates an omission, and such independent expressions as *yes* or *no* and the name of the person spoken to in conversation, commas are used to clarify meaning when sentence elements are out of their usual order, to separate interrupters from the main idea, and to make clear the members of an enumeration. It is obvious that after end-of-sentence punctuation, the simple uses of the comma in dates and addresses, with *yes* and *no*, and with the name of the person spoken to in conversation will come first in the child's experience. The teacher, writing at the children's dictation, uses commas in these ways, explaining their usefulness as the pupils read back to her what she has written. From the beginning the purpose of punctuation is to help interpret meaning. Gradually, the child has occasion to enumerate: *Mary, John, and Henry came to our party. We had popcorn, cookies, and lemonade for refreshments.* Later he will be more ambitious in his enumerations. *We wrote the play, made the scenery, and acted the parts for our visitors.* In the upper grades he is using more formal enumerations still: *We have studied Mexico from three points of view: its geographical setting, its products and business enterprises, and its social customs and arts.*

Interruptions follow the same pattern of gradual maturing with thinking:

John, my cousin, came to our house for Christmas.

The gauchos, having been driven out, roamed the broad fields to the south.

My Uncle Bill, who is in the Navy Air Corps, has been around the world three times.

My Aunt Caroline, since she went to New Mexico, has sent us some colorful Indian beadwork.

In each case the purpose is to keep the main idea clear—what we are talking about and what we are saying about it—by setting off the interrupters. The two commas act as hooks by means of which to lift out whatever interrupts the main thought. It is interesting to note that the punctuation bears no relationship to the particular grammatical construction of the interrupter. It is the *fact of interruption* that creates the need for the commas.

When children grow in power to vary the order of elements in their sentences, they find increasing need for punctuation.

When we were eating, Spot sniffed around our feet.

There is danger of eating Spot, if the comma is omitted. Similar problems arise in such sentences as the following:

By the way, I wore the costume you had when you were a clown.
Racing like a mad dog, around the corner bolted Jack.

As children mature in their ability to sense the effect of connectives, they learn the importance of the comma to make the meaning clear:

We went disguised, as Mrs. Broderick asked us to.

We met Bill and Jack at the corner, and Mary got on further down the street.

We had hoped to reach the gate to Yellowstone by night, but the flat tire made it impossible.

Growth in ability to punctuate cannot outrun the child's grasp of meaning. For example, time and again teachers labor to explain the formation of the possessive case with the apostrophe, only to find their instructions carefully followed when no possession is indicated by the meaning.

The boys' raced to town.

The light gleaming on the houses' shown in our eyes.

Meaning, *the fact of possession*, must be established first.

11. Growth in Punctuation Paralleling Maturity in Use of Language

It is unfortunate that no materials exist by which one may follow typical writings of the same children through a period of years to note the evidence of growth in expression and consequent shifts in the punctuation necessary. In lieu of such data, the writer has substituted an analysis of the punctuation used in four widely distributed but comparable pages of reading matter from carefully graduated basic readers for Grades I, II, IV, and VI (8). There are two weaknesses in the data. One is that the readers are simpler in sentence structure than the speaking and perhaps even the writing of some children within each grade. The direction of progress, however, is the same. The other is that the data will give no indication of the variations in performance among individual writers. They represent a sort of conventionalized design rather than a series of individual pictures.

In the four readers examined (8) there was a progressive increase in the average length of sentences from grade to grade: 6.9, 7.9, 12.3, and 14.6 words. The longest sentence in the first-grade book was 15 words; in the fourth-grade, 25; and in the sixth-grade, 39. The use of conversation and of quotation marks was six times as frequent in the lower grades as it was in the fourth and the sixth. In the lower grades the quotations tended to be unbroken; in the upper grades, broken. The use of the period, question mark, and exclamation point at the ends of sentences remained relatively constant.

In the lower grades, use of the capital letter was confined almost entirely to the names of persons and animals. At the sixth-grade level, there was a sudden increase in names of tribes of peoples, place names, names of boats and firms, and proper adjectives such as *Indian*—all clearly indicative of broadening contacts and interests in the experience and growth of children.

Most interesting of all is what happened in the use of the comma, a mark of punctuation most closely associated with the enrichment, modification, and interruption of ideas. The needs of the first two grades were met, almost without exception, by the comma to set off *yes* and *no*, the name of the person spoken to, and the parenthetical word *too*, as in *Helen did it, too*, and to separate quoted words from the rest of the sentence or two repeated words from each other in such sentences as, *The wagon went bump, bump*.

In Grades IV and VI, the series included single adjectives, phrases, or predicates, indicative of more sustained thought or enumeration. Appositives were introduced, some of them in long series. Six dependent clauses needed punctuation because they were out of place. Connectives, *before*, *because*, *for*, *as*, and *though*, introduced clauses which were either interrupters or needed commas for clarity. Independent modifiers complicated the problem of punctuation: "The stream wound through the level space at the bottom, *its banks covered with fresh green willows*." "The young inventors made short flights in this new machine—*altogether nearly a thousand*." Introductory words and phrases, many of them making clear the time of the events or ordering the relationships of ideas, became apparent: *now*, *at this end*, or *in the first place*. Longer sentences also necessitated a pause before *and* or *but*. A colon introduced a series: *He reasoned this way: first, . . . , second,* Dashes indicated breaks in thought, pauses, or long appositive modifiers.

Nothing could be more interesting or more fruitful than such a study of the *punctuation necessitated by growing maturity in expression*. To be worth much, such an analysis should be made of *the writing of the same children over a period of years*. What it would show about the relationship of punctuation to meaning would be important; but what it would reveal about maturing power in the use of language and its relationship to thinking and to experience would be far more significant.

12. The Grade Placement of Topics in English

It is clear from the evidence of this chapter that there is no hierarchy of discrete skills in language which can be recorded serially and learned

in a similar fashion.¹ The process of growth in control over language is one of gradual development of a unified, interrelated body of skills in response to the social stimuli of the child's environment—a sort of spiral growth, broadening, extending, and refining what is there and in use, for the most part, from infancy on. Perhaps the organic development of a tree as it reaches out into the subsoil and into the atmosphere for sustenance is as appropriate a figure as any, its growth depending on its capacity for reaching and assimilating and on the amount of nourishment it finds available. Neither can there be mastery of certain fundamentals by all children at a given grade level; for growth in language is like growth in other aspects of the child's being. It depends on the innate powers with which he is endowed as an individual, the challenge and nurture of his environment, and his own peculiar pattern and rate of growth.

One is reminded of the mothers who went with their fourteen-month-old babies to the doctor, one worried because her child had all his teeth, but could not walk; the other, because her child was "running all over the place," but "didn't have a sign of a tooth." "Give 'em time!" was the doctor's answer. "An infant who expends all his energy on growing teeth has none left for learning to walk! He'll tackle that next." There are no minimum essentials of growth for fourteen-month-olds which can be applied to all children. Similarly, development of control over language is part of a total pattern of growth, proceeding at different rates for different children. It is nurtured best in a social environment, where grappling with problems and carrying out enterprises stimulates thinking and association with others. Motive is an important factor. Social acceptance of the individual, if tied up with development in language, plays an important part in his desire to succeed. Recognition of the fact that through language he can attain what he wants is fundamental. Direct attack upon improving language skills as such in the situation in which children are using them is essential to economical growth.

Needs in the field of usage tend to be individual in character, although a few appear to be common to different stages of development. Analysis of the skills in punctuation and capitalization used at different grade levels indicates the possibility of discovering those most important at different stages of the child's progress through school. It is quite possible that, for the sake of practical curriculum-making, *moments of initial attack* upon specific problems may be worked out for individual school systems, but

¹ For a comprehensive summary of recent research on various phases of the language arts, the reader is referred to *Language Arts and Fine Arts*. Review of Educational Research, Vol. XIII, No. 2. Washington: American Educational Research Association, 1943.

obviously *no set standards of mastery can be imposed upon all children at any specific grade level*. Language power simply doesn't grow that way. Progress in it cannot outrun the individual child's capacity for thinking nor his social development in relationship to other human beings and to his environment.

The analysis of outcomes in conversation and in discussion set for different levels of the school system, which are discussed in this chapter, indicate clearly that it is possible to map the *direction of growth* in each of the areas, and even to describe the stage of progress reached by specific groups of children in relationship to it. Nothing more illuminating has come out in recent years than the careful record of the use of language "in a social context" by ten seven-year-olds in a New York City school (3). Similar records carried on over a period of years for the same children at different stages of their development, and for other children less highly favored in home and school background, would be invaluable in helping to describe more adequately the direction of growth in language and the conditions which best foster it. Even then, of course, we should be unable to fix the moment at which any given child should reach a given level of development; but we should be more intelligent in recognizing *where* he is and the direction we should give him toward further progress. In the meantime, we can only set the stage in the social context in which language develops, provide the motive or persuade the child to do so himself, direct the learning as skilfully and as economically as our present knowledge will permit, and humbly watch his mastery of language grow.

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CHAPTER V

CARING FOR INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP NEEDS

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Effective instruction in language arts depends largely upon adaptation of instruction to the particular needs of the pupils. If all children in a classroom started the year with exactly the same level of achievement in all phases of language arts, progressed at exactly the same rates, and had identical interests and future needs, teaching language arts would be greatly simplified. Differences among pupils, however, are probably greater in language arts than in any other subject or group of subjects. Communication skills are shaped very largely by home environment which differs for each individual, with the result that wide individual differences appear before school entrance and continue throughout the school life of the child. Effective instruction requires careful analysis of individual needs and skilled adjustment of classroom activities to fit those needs.

The complexity of instruction in all school subjects has increased greatly in American schools during the present century. We are now holding in school large numbers of children who were formerly considered ineducable. Approximately 80 per cent of all children starting in the first grade now enter high school, as compared to 30 per cent in 1920 and 10 per cent in 1900. For the first time in our national history we are approaching the goal of providing education for "all the children of all the people." This revolutionary change in our school population brings the greatest challenge ever faced by teachers in any nation. We must provide in the same classroom effective means of teaching pupils with wide differences in language backgrounds, learning rates, and motivating interests. We have as yet made only a small beginning on this problem.

I. PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ADAPTING INSTRUCTION TO INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP NEEDS

The difficulty of providing an adequate language-arts program in any grade is greatly increased by the wide range of individual differences found in that grade. Any textbook, workbook, or course of study in lan-

guage for any grade is found immediately to be unsuitable for many pupils within the grade. The slow learners are not yet ready for the lessons presented, and the rapid learners have long since acquired the skills involved. This is true of language-grammar skills, sentence and paragraph organization, ability to write and speak clearly, use of social amenities in speaking and writing, and other phases of language growth such as reading, writing, and spelling. Ability grouping may reduce some of the differences in instructional needs, but wide differences will always be found even in supposedly homogeneous groups. The problem of the teacher is to arrange the work in language arts so that slow learners are given instruction to fit their particular needs, while the more rapid learners are provided with opportunities to develop further the use of the skills they have already acquired.

We have not yet arrived at a carefully graded and well-defined series of steps in language development. Instruction in written and oral composition is still largely in the era of "try, try, again," with neither the pupil nor the average teacher having any clear concept of what the next step in improvement should be. This lack of an established order in systematic development of language skills adds to the difficulty of providing for individual differences. We can classify oral and written products roughly as being "excellent" or "poor," and can identify specific errors which may be attacked, but we do not yet know precisely how to analyze the mental functions underlying the selection, organization, or presentation of ideas. Until we develop a more adequate knowledge of the specific nature and order of mental functions underlying language activities, our teaching of language arts is likely to continue to be somewhat confused. If we are ever able through research to establish a series of levels of development in language abilities, we can then classify pupils in those levels, regardless of age or grade, and provide instruction that will lift the child to the next level. In the absence of such scientific knowledge, we must analyze pupil needs through systematic observation of the miscellaneous skills and abilities which we are able to identify at present.

The lack of exact knowledge of the mental functions underlying language ability has resulted in a division of educational opinion about the language program in the schools. Some teachers would prefer a well-organized skills program, including formal instruction in grammar, punctuation, sentence construction, paragraph organization, vocabulary development, styles of writing, and the skills of reading and speaking. The dangers inherent in this approach are the stifling of initiative in speaking and writing, the inhibiting of free expression and creative tendencies, the loss of thought content through overanalysis, and the lack of transfer of the abilities learned because of the separation of instruction from vital

activities. Some leaders of education, though, would omit all formal instruction in basic language abilities, encouraging language growth through a well-motivated program of purposive writing and speaking situations, closely integrated with various classroom activities. This program also has its dangers, particularly for the slow-learning child. Specific instruction in many phases of language growth will certainly be needed by the child whose oral and written efforts are ineffective and inadequate. The child may conceal his deficiencies by limiting his speaking and writing to those few skills in which he feels secure. He may have the desire to improve but be bewildered by constant failure and lack of evidence of growth in any specific skill.

Any approach to language development should safeguard the child's development through systematic observation of his growth in various language abilities. Some method of observing and recording attainments and needs in these abilities will be necessary to enable the teacher to adjust instruction to individual differences. There are so many specific skills and so many general abilities to observe that no teacher can keep track of the child's development without some systematic method of evaluating or analyzing that development. Check lists, informal tests, standard tests, and cumulative records all have their place in evaluating language development.

II. SELECTING THE SKILLS TO BE TAUGHT

If we assume that the teacher is to follow the language program outlined in chapter ii of this yearbook, how is she to know which of the skills are needed by the particular group of pupils in her care? There are at present no standard tests for such functions as the ability to select items to be expressed, the ability to write and speak clearly, or the knowledge and use of the social amenities in language activities. Furthermore, as one looks at the long list of subtopics which indicate further subdivisions in turn, it becomes evident that any exhaustive analysis of all these topics will probably require more time than is available. Local courses of study and local supervisory emphases will require more special attention to some of these topics than to others. The wise teacher will select those items from the list in chapter ii which most nearly fit local demands and will plan a practical procedure for the evaluation of pupil accomplishment in relation to those items.

In planning at the beginning of the year an analysis of language abilities upon which to base a program of instruction which provides for the individual needs of pupils, the teacher will need first to select those skills and abilities which she will teach during the year. In order to balance the

program, it is suggested that some attention be paid to each of the following:

1. Analysis of attitude and interest in various language activities
2. Analysis of ability in selecting items to be expressed
3. Analysis of ability to speak and write clearly
4. Analysis of knowledge and use of social amenities in communicating
5. Analysis of mastery of standards of good usage

While the different rates of learning in language abilities will necessitate considerable overlapping of instruction in contiguous grades, specific emphases should be decided upon for each of the different grades. The decisions in regard to grade content should be made co-operatively by the teachers in all grades. The instruction in any grade will be made more effective by a definite understanding of what has been presented in earlier grades and what will be emphasized in later grades.

Let us suppose that it is decided that the major language tasks in a fifth grade will be concerned with making oral and written reports in a unit-activity program in content subjects. The following may appear to the teacher to be the abilities to be taught:

1. Interest and attitude in various language-arts abilities
 - a) Estimate of interest and confidence in making oral and written reports
 - b) Analysis of relative interests in various topics and activities
2. Selecting ideas to be expressed. Deciding what to say or write
 - a) How to choose a topic for a report
 - b) How to select information that will interest the group
 - c) How to present the information in a manner that will hold the attention of the group
 - d) Effective use of sources and references
3. The ability to speak and write clearly and exactly
 - a) Giving accurate accounts of materials read or heard, and putting ideas into one's own words
 - b) How to organize the items for a report
 - c) How to develop paragraphs or sections of the report
 - d) How to introduce technical vocabulary
 - e) Good enunciation and expression
 - f) Legible handwriting, neat presentation of illustrations and writing in reports
4. Social amenities involved in communicating with others
 - a) Ability to ask questions which aid the speaker and audience to a fuller understanding of the topic presented
 - b) What to do when you do not understand the speaker
 - c) What to do when you disagree with the speaker
 - d) What to do during his talk when you think the speaker is mistaken in the accuracy of his statements
 - e) How to take part in a discussion

- f) How to suggest improvements in presentation without offending the speaker
 - g) How to show appreciation of a good report
 - h) Giving credit to sources of information, illustration, and obligations in exact quotation
5. Items involved in speaking and writing correctly
- a) Avoiding speech errors and poor speech habits common to the community, such as saw, seen; went, gone; double negatives; past tenses of verbs; and the pronunciation of word endings such as *th* and *ing*
 - b) Avoiding a series of sentences connected by *and*. Omitting useless words and sounds at the beginning of sentences: well, why, and so, ah—ah, etc.
 - c) Use of comma, colon, semicolon, quotation marks
 - d) Capitalization, abbreviations
 - e) Use of correct bibliographical form in references

When the teacher has decided upon the particular abilities to be emphasized in the language program for the year, the next step is analyzing the needs of pupils in regard to those abilities. There will be some pupils who have highly developed abilities in all phases of the program, making it unnecessary to burden them with further direct teaching. Others will show deficiencies only in certain aspects of the work. How can the teacher discover early in the year which pupils need specific instruction in various parts of the program?

The best method is to plan a program of informal tests or introductory lessons on each phase of the work. In each of these tests or lessons the work of each pupil should be evaluated and analyzed, and a record made on a master chart. In order to simplify the task so that the entire program of evaluation can be made during the first month of the school year without dominating the entire language program, it will be necessary to combine many of the skills into a single informal test or introductory lesson.

The labor involved in making an analysis of individual pupil needs will be repaid manyfold in improved motivation of the language work both for pupil and teacher. The pupil can do little to aid his own improvement when he has in mind no specific skills toward which to direct his effort. Pupil planning in skills work is dependent almost entirely upon specific analysis of the particular needs of the individual. When no specific goals are available, the pupil is left with only a vague desire to improve, is constantly annoyed by fragmentary criticism, and is unable to sense any improvement in his language growth. This sense of futility of instruction is often shared by the teacher. On the other hand, specific analyses of need reveal to the child the relative importance of specific items in the instructional program, enable him to help himself in overcoming his difficulties, and give him a sense of pride of accomplishment through knowledge of progress in various phases of language work.

The need for motivation of the language-arts program and the specific motivation needs of individual pupils within a class must be a matter of first concern to the teacher in building a language-arts program. All pupils in a fifth grade have had experience in oral and written language and have acquired differing attitudes toward speaking and writing. If the class as a whole dislikes any particular writing task, if there is a general aversion to the writing of poetry, if only a few people enjoy the presenting of oral reports, if correct speech is ridiculed, and if there is no interest in improvement in speech habits, it is futile to plan a language program which does not take these attitudes into account. There are many ways to take an inventory of the attitudes of the child, including questionnaires, rating scales, tests which ask the child to put activities in order of preference, and observation of pupil reaction to classroom tasks.

Checking the order of preference for various activities is one of the easiest methods of determining children's attitudes toward various language tasks. Lyons¹ study of children's preferences for different types of reading assignments provides illustrative samples of this type of test. She selected eighteen topics for reading assignments and presented them in the following ways: reading before making a visit or field trip, reading as a basis for making various types of oral reports, reading to gain information for many kinds of writing tasks, reading as a basis for construction or experiment, reading to plan for entertainment, and reading merely to find information on the topic. A sample of the items included in the test follows: (The child indicates first, second, and third choices by placing appropriate numbers before each suggestion.)

- Read to learn about cameras and photography.
- Read in order to prepare for a visit to the high school Camera Club.
- Read to find information for preparing an exhibit on photography for a hobby show.
- Read so that you can get help and information on how to develop and enlarge pictures.
- Read so that you can give a talk to your classmates on photography as a hobby.
- Read so that you can prepare a booklet for the school library on photography as a hobby.

It is interesting to note the order of preference of three hundred sixth-grade children for the various reading assignments. They were rated in the following order, with statistically significant differences between each type of activity:

¹ Catherine Lyons, "The Relative Appeal of Reading Assignments." Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Education, Boston University, 1943.

1. Reading before making a visit.
2. Read just to find out.
3. Read in order to construct something.
4. Read in order to plan entertainments.
5. Read as a basis for talking.
6. Read as a basis for writing activities.

It is evident that, among these pupils, there was much to be done to stimulate interest in writing. Despite the general tendency, there were some individuals who always preferred writing to any other activity. Oral reports rated slightly higher in classrooms where more progressive practices were in use. If we may consider these three hundred children as typical, the motivation of writing and speaking is obviously a major problem in the middle grades. Any teacher would do well to study the motivation needs of the pupils in her class.

III. THE SELECTION AND PRESENTATION OF IDEAS

The next item on our fifth-grade teacher's list is "Selecting ideas to be expressed." The teacher will find that available standard tests lend no assistance in evaluating this ability. In discovering pupils' abilities in finding topics for reports, the teacher may select typical units in social studies or science, present them briefly, and ask each child to write special reports on many topics. For example, the teacher might suggest that the class is to make a study of the importance of cotton to daily life. After a class discussion of the source of cotton and the uses of cotton, the teacher might ask the children to list as many topics for special reports as they can think of. It would be discovered that some children have a long and interesting list, while others can think of few or none. This ability is of great importance to pupil planning in unit-activity work, but many pupils need special help in it. It is an ability that responds well to specific teaching.

In the same manner the teacher may evaluate the ability of pupils in presenting material in an interesting fashion. If they are asked to write ideas on ways to make interesting a report on the uses of cotton, some pupils will be full of ideas, suggesting exhibits, experiments, construction, lantern slides, motion pictures, diagrams, dramatizations, radio programs, maps, etc. Others will have nothing to offer. The use of sources and references may be tested by asking pupils where to look for information about cotton. Here again, wide individual differences will be revealed. The results may be recorded for each child, and those needing special help may be grouped for practice and instruction.

The ability to speak and write clearly and exactly is made up of many minor skills. Most of them may be systematically observed or measured

by an ingenious teacher. To test the ability to give an accurate written account of materials read or heard, the teacher needs only to have the children write an account of materials which she reads to them or of materials which all have read recently. The resulting written reports may be scored for completeness, accuracy, and organization. If objective scoring is desirable, the teacher may make a list of the major and minor points in order and then check each child's account against that list. The ability to organize items may be evaluated by giving the class a long list of items which might be included in a report on the growing of cotton and asking each child to organize them into an outline. This may also be used to test the child's ability to classify ideas into appropriate paragraphs. The evaluation of clarity in oral reports takes more time and may well be checked by observing the child's oral work in class rather than by a more formal measure. Enunciation and expression may also be observed for each child, and the observations noted for future planning. Legibility in handwriting should be recorded, and further analysis may be made through the use of current analysis procedures which note the particular elements which need attention.

A teacher may observe the child's knowledge of social amenities involved in presenting, hearing, or discussing a report. This may be done by preparing a questionnaire which presents many typical situations and asks the child what should be done in that situation. However, the child's use of his knowledge of social amenities can only be observed by his practices in actual situations. The teacher may make a list of the factors considered important and note each child's habits on that list after she has observed the child in several classroom situations.

In measuring the child's attainments in the skills involved in writing correctly according to accepted usage, the teacher will find much help in standard tests and in test lessons presented in workbooks and in language-arts texts. Such tests provide a quick survey of the child's knowledge of correct grammatical forms, punctuation, abbreviations, capitalization, etc. The actual usage of these abilities in writing may be evaluated by an analysis of several papers which the child has written. Speech errors and habits may be checked against a list prepared by the teacher.

When the teacher has prepared a master chart of each child's performance on the various abilities in oral and written expression to be taught during the year, her plans for individualized instruction may be made intelligently. Pupils who score uniformly high in all abilities may be encouraged to utilize their abilities in larger language projects. They will not need to waste time in unnecessary instruction or practice, nor will they rob the other children of pleasure in their work by taking all the honors without effort. If most members of the class require help in cer-

tain phases of the program, large group instruction is indicated. Those skills which are mastered by all but a few of the children may be taught to those few only. Each child should know the specific items on which he needs help, so that he will see the importance of class or group instruction and may practice by himself those abilities in which he needs to improve.

IV. PLANNING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

In planning a year's program in oral and written composition, the teacher must keep two distinct problems in mind. The first is that of motivating the work through activities that will appeal to all children as highly important. The situations must provide individual or group tasks commensurate with each child's ability, and the purpose of the work should be important to every child. The second problem is that of providing specific instruction in the basic skills found by preliminary tests to be needed by the child. These two tasks may overlap to a great extent, but they must be watched as separate functions. It is well to treat them separately, particularly for slow learners, since pleasure in the performance of important language tasks is often quenched by criticism of minor speech and writing errors. When the child is speaking or writing on an important topic, special attention should be paid to the ideas presented. Questions should be raised on the form of presentation only when his meaning is not clear. Suggestions for assistance in improving technical aspects of the speaking or writing must be made with care and, perhaps, in a separate period which provides specific practice in the ability. Whenever possible, technical corrections should be made prior to the actual presentation of the project so that the child may gain the added satisfaction of presenting his important ideas skilfully. A child is much more interested in assistance before presentation than he is in a recounting of his mistakes after he has made his report.

The first step in planning the language program is to choose units of work in which there will be a wide range of opportunities for pupils with differing interests and abilities. In addition, the total project and the individual tasks should appeal to every child as important. A sure way to kill interest is to have themes on a single topic for all pupils, written for correction by the teacher, and finally assigned to the wastebasket or to a pupil's file of corrected themes. Even though the task is a business letter or an article written for some vitally significant purpose, the knowledge that all but one of the products will be discarded tends to diminish the interest of all but the two or three best pupils. Individualization of assignments is highly important to the motivation of oral and written composition and to the development of a democratic attitude in the classroom.

The teacher who is preparing a social studies or a science unit on the importance of cotton will do well to discuss with the class the final use of all the writing or speaking to be done. The end of the study may be an exhibit in the school or in a downtown store window; it may be a program to be put on before a school assembly or before a group of adults or children; it may be the preparation of a magazine to be sent to a children's hospital or to a class in some other part of the country; or it may be a series of displays on a school bulletin board. The study may precede the visit of an adult who is to talk to the class, or it may precede a visit or series of visits to some factory or store. Once the purpose of the main project is established, each of the minor tasks will take on importance. In planning a year's program in language arts, the teacher should have in mind a series of projects which will carry the interest of the class. After the pupils have had practice in planning, they will take much of the responsibility for suggesting the major composition activities, but one should not expect much help in planning from pupils who have been immersed in purposeless competitive assignments.

The dividing of composition assignments in a major project requires real professional skill on the part of the teacher. When the pupils have listed the many topics and tasks which are possible parts of the main project, the choice of tasks cannot be left entirely to the pupils. Tasks which require library research in adult books can be handled well by superior pupils only. Less capable pupils may perform tasks which require less study and composition, such as preparing paragraphs to accompany pictures or short talks which explain a process or an experiment. Children who need a high level of motivation or whose self-confidence needs bolstering may be assigned to tasks which have high dramatic value in the final project. There must be a thoughtful balance between giving pupils the tasks which they can do well and tasks requiring abilities in which they need to improve. It is not necessary for all pupils to take part in every project. A strong program may be built with several different projects in different stages of preparation, with small groups of children working on each one.

The program for improvement of basic language abilities is greatly enhanced by the constant use of important group-planned projects. The child will discover that the instructional needs revealed by the informal testing program are significant in his work. Practice in the language abilities in which he is not proficient takes on added zest when the skills are to be utilized immediately. The dangers inherent in an intensive skills program are reduced by a rich purposive group program. But the teacher must not assume that enthusiastic participation in a language program guarantees a balanced growth in all of the basic abilities. There will be

need for constant observation of individual pupil growth in these abilities and provision for separate practice in specific abilities.

The skills program can be planned on the basis of tests given at the beginning of the school year. Definite time should be set aside in the program for practice in each of the four large groups of language activities in which the tests reveal pupil deficiencies. Children who need help in selecting items to be expressed may be given help and practice in this by a series of lessons which require this ability. Similar practice may be provided for children who need help in the ability to speak or to write clearly. Various elements in these abilities and the situations in which they are most commonly used are listed in chapter ii. Children who have shown weaknesses in the social amenities involved in communicating must have their problems pointed out, and definite plans should be made for bringing about improvement. Poor social habits in class discussion, such as monopolizing the conversation, speaking too loudly or too positively, speaking disparagingly or in a patronizing manner of the contributions of others, or similar faults, had best be matters for private advice. At the beginning of the year such social habits may well be matters for general class discussion. In these three large groups of language activities the teacher will find only a limited amount of help in language textbooks and still less in workbooks. Unfortunately, these abilities are the ones in which our present language programs are most deficient, and it will be necessary to prepare special lessons for many phases of them.

It is easy to individualize the program for the fourth large group of language activities—items involved in speaking and writing correctly according to standards of good usage. Textbooks, workbooks, and practice lessons are available for most of these skills. A program of practice may be built for each child in the correct use of verb forms, in grammatical construction of sentences, in punctuation, capitalization, and other technical aspects of writing. Some teachers make work sheets covering these skills, providing for pretests, practice, and final tests. A child who shows a weakness in any phase of this aspect of language is then given the intensive practice included in the work sheet. It should be noted that such intensive practice in any of the basic language abilities should be given only to those children who need such practice.

Certain aspects of the language program are peculiar to particular communities. Individual differences are found among communities and among different populations in the same community. Any textbook or course of study in language arts will require modification and supplementing in order to adjust it to the local needs. The topics and activities chosen for major language projects in a small school in a farming community should not usually be the same as those in a manufacturing town or a

large industrial city. Library facilities, opportunities for visiting near-by industries, local occupations, community interests, and current problems of high local interest will set limits or will open special possibilities for the language program. Local speech habits will also shape the language program. Foreign-language backgrounds will present special instructional needs in regard to pronunciation habits, sentence structure, and fluency of English expression.

Individual differences among teachers must also be taken into account in planning the language-arts program. A teacher who is particularly apt in imparting interest in the aesthetic phases of language such as poetry, drama, and oral expression should be encouraged to utilize her ability and to leave special emphases on other parts of the language program to later grades or other teachers. A teacher who is able to handle basic abilities very well but is unable to manage unit activities in the language program should be permitted to plan most of her work accordingly. In planning the language-arts curriculum, the special abilities and interests of teachers must be taken into account. It is important, however, that all phases of the program be included at some time in the child's school life.

V. THE BURDEN UPON THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Ability grouping has at various times been proposed as a solution to the problem of individual differences among pupils. In very large schools the grouping of pupils according to ability in reading and language achievement simplifies teaching problems to some extent. Even when such groupings are made, however, marked individual differences in instructional need are still found. Children who have good intelligence but special difficulty in language arts may occasionally profit greatly by appropriate instruction in remedial classes. The professional ingenuity of the classroom teacher in providing for individual differences is the only real guarantee of effective instruction in language arts. Remedial classes and ability grouping can at best provide only partial and temporary help.

CHAPTER VI

TYPES OF ORGANIZATION OF LANGUAGE-ARTS PROGRAMS

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The organization of the language program will be considered from two angles: (1) the administrative, which deals with mechanical features, such as scheduling language activities in the daily program; and (2) the curricular, which deals with the relation of the teaching of language to other teaching that must be done.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF LANGUAGE-ARTS PROGRAMS

The type of language activities carried on in a school is greatly influenced by the way in which the school itself is organized. Time allotments in the daily program, policies that determine whether or not reading, spelling, handwriting, and language are to be taught as separate subjects, the presence or absence of departmentalized teaching, and measures taken to articulate the program from grade to grade or from year to year are strong factors in determining the character of the instructional program in language arts.

1. Scheduling of Language Activities

Until comparatively recent years, English was almost universally taught in a separate period, with lessons whose content and activities were quite unrelated to the instruction given in other subjects. Administrators and teachers were under those circumstances frequently concerned with questions of time allotment. In order to answer these questions, investigators¹ busied themselves with discovering such facts as the following: Time allotments for the teaching of language remained almost

¹ See R. L. Lyman, *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language, and Composition*. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 36. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1929.

constant through the intermediate and upper grades. Reading and arithmetic were the only subjects given more time than language. Enormous variations in time allotment prevailed between and within school systems.

Many American elementary schools still utilize a separate period for language teaching—sometimes daily, sometimes only as need arises for practice on usage, mechanics of composition, and skills in communication. The activities in such a language period vary among teachers somewhat as follows: (1) English is taught in units whose subject matter is unrelated to lessons in the other subjects, practice periods being interpolated as needs arise; (2) the units in English derive their subject matter from concurrent activities in the social studies, science, or literature, practice being interpolated as needs become apparent; and (3) the period for English is utilized for intensive practice on skills and items of usage, the expressional aspects of language being a part of the children's learning in connection with other subjects or activities throughout the day. The increasingly popular experience curriculum sometimes utilizes the last-mentioned type of separate language period wherein a particular skill or usage is practiced after a need for it has arisen in the on-going activities of the children in the integrated program or in the community.

Inasmuch as curricular organization is involved here, discussion will be limited to a single quotation reflecting the modern point of view.

The school which seeks reality develops language as a part of the whole school program; emphasizes those functions of language that children use and will use in daily life; recognizes individual differences in abilities, achievements, and interests; recognizes the different growth-levels of the elementary-school child and develops the program in terms of these levels.²

2. Departmentalization in the Elementary School

Departmentalization in the elementary school is another practice that is gradually being modified or abandoned. A few administrators retain the practice of having a separate teacher for each subject, with subjects as closely related as language and handwriting or spelling being completely divorced. Such a practice cannot be approved by those who believe in functional, integrated learning.

Those schools which have not yet returned to a system in which elementary-school pupils remain with one teacher throughout the day, have rather commonly instituted a transitional program featuring one of the following: (1) co-operative planning, in which the teachers of different subjects deliberately plan a correlation of the activities which each will

² Elizabeth Guilfoile, "Reality in the Language Program," *Elementary School Journal*, XLIII (September, 1941), 49.

direct for a given group of children, so that language will provide intensive training in effective communication of ideas in other classes and, in turn, the other subjects will serve language by providing interesting topics and information for use in communication activities; and (2) a broad grouping of related subjects, such as the language arts, the social studies, and science. Under the latter plan, the children remain a longer time with three or four teachers, each of whom attempts to correlate and integrate all the work offered within a broad field. The platoon system may be considered a special variation of the second or grouped-subject plan.

3. Provision for Individual Differences

Procedures for caring for individual differences are partially administrative. For instance, the practice of ability-grouping was originally developed as a measure to care for such differences. Practically all good schools provide small-group instruction within the larger class-groups whenever particular pupils show common needs for learning some specific skill. Large school systems also provide for teaching subnormal children in a separate room with especially appropriate types of materials and instruction. Some teachers organize their classrooms into writing or speaking laboratories whenever the children are preparing discussions and reports or when it seems probable that individual guidance must be given.

4. Articulation of the Language-Arts Program

As long ago as 1912 a committee of the National Council of Teachers of English, launched a study to determine the degree of articulation between the English programs of the elementary and high schools. Articulation was found at that time to be very faulty. Occasional school systems have since attempted to improve the situation by appointing joint committees of elementary and secondary teachers to set up curriculum-development programs in which cumulative standards for the primary, middle, junior high, and senior high school administrative divisions are carefully articulated year by year, as well as division by division.³ One of the necessary bases for any effective articulation of the instructional program is, of course, an adequate system of cumulative records of each pupil's needs, interests, and achievements.

II. CURRICULAR ORGANIZATION OF LANGUAGE-ARTS PROGRAMS

Current practice in organizing the language curriculum may be analyzed and discussed from several angles. There is, in the first place, the

³ For instance, see the mimeographed guides put out for the primary and intermediate grades in Cincinnati in 1938 and 1939; or J. P. Milligan, "The English Expression Program in the Bloomfield, New Jersey, Public Schools," *Elementary English Review*, XV (January, 1938), 5-11.

vertical organization of the language program, involving such matters as grade placement and sequence of items to be learned. There are, on the other hand, matters of horizontal organization such as the correlation, integration, or fusion of the curriculum, as contrasted with the isolated teaching of each subject. In the third place, curricular organization may be considered in terms of the base from which it is started: (1) organization on the basis of subject matter or activity units, where skills are introduced as needed; or (2) organization based on the language-skills-to-be-learned, with topics or activities selected in terms of their appropriateness to the child's interests and to the learning of the language skills currently under consideration. It is obvious that the different types of curricular organization reflect varying points of view.

1. Grade Placement and Sequence of Items in the Curriculum

Early investigations to establish a desirable grade placement for the items in the English curriculum were summarized by Lyman,⁴ who noted that these studies were largely an attempt to determine prevailing practice through the analysis of textbooks and courses of study and that they were, therefore, setting up a most unreliable guide. All such studies indicated a wide disparity in the grade placement of language items, this situation being explained by Lyman in the following terms: (1) Repetition through successive grades is necessary if language skills are to be thoroughly mastered. (2) Various uses of an item, such as the comma, should be learned over a period of years, a few being allocated for especial attention each year. (3) "The most important factor in allocating specific language items to any grade is the exact status of the pupils in that grade with respect to those items." Lyman's statements, made in 1929, are still quite generally accepted.

Another reason for disparity in grade placement is that authorities differ as to the basis on which placement should be determined. Some favor organization on the basis of the "logic of the English itself." Others believe in using the psychological basis of the child's maturity, interests, and aptitudes. Still others believe in a sociological basis, with the demands of adult living in our society as the determining factor. Probably not any one alone, but all of these factors should be kept in mind when matters of grade placement or sequence of learnings are being considered. Horn⁵ has proposed six factors that should help to determine grade placement:

⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 58-64.

⁵ Ernest Horn, "Principles of Method in Elementary English Composition," *Elementary English Review*, XIV (October, 1937), 222-23.

1. The frequency and cruciality of the specific skills in the language activities of adults
2. The frequency and cruciality of the specific skills in the language demands made on children both in and out of school
3. The readiness of pupils to make use of the specific language skills
4. The relation of skills to each other in terms of facilitation and interference
5. The number of different skills which it is psychologically desirable to present to the pupil at any one grade level
6. The innate learning difficulty of the skills

On only the first two of these six factors is there much experimental evidence, except in the field of spelling, to help in the determination of the grade placement of language items. Furthermore, social demands and the abilities and maturity of children vary so much both within and among groups that definite grade placement of language items for children in general is extremely difficult.

The current trend is toward the determination of desirable learning sequences for the specific items of language to be mastered. Such sequences being known, each school system can set up a schedule of tentative grade placement, with the recommendation that each teacher deviate from the schedule when the interests and abilities of her pupils make it advisable to do so. There should always be a parallel recommendation, however, that all items be reviewed and used under close supervision in the years immediately following their first introduction, so that complete mastery can be attained. While much experimentation in optimal learning sequences has yet to be done, curriculum-makers can secure a considerable amount of help from the reports of O'Rourke and of the National Council of Teachers of English.⁶

2. Individualization of Practice

In the field of usage, Lyman⁷ states a fundamental principle: "The remedial work which follows revelations of language weaknesses must be largely, if not exclusively, individual." Similar individualization in supplementary practice on the other skills of oral and written communication is advisable. Individualization of the curriculum should likewise be an important consideration in those periods in which pupils are stimulated to express ideas, as witness the reports about children at work in *They All Want To Write*.⁸

⁶ L. J. O'Rourke, *Rebuilding the English-Usage Curriculum to Insure Greater Mastery of Essentials*. Washington: Psychological Institute, 1934; *An Experience Curriculum in English*. National Council of Teachers of English Monograph, No. 4. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1935.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁸ Dorothy Ferebee, et al., *They All Want To Write*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1939.

Curriculum-workers are careful to include opportunities for individual practice of language skills and for individual contributions in the social situations of the classroom. Individualized materials are prepared and so organized as to be easily used.⁹ Classified files of practice materials, systematic inventories to ascertain weaknesses, and individualized practice and mastery tests are features of an effective organization to take care of each child's needs. Opportunities to make individual contributions in committee enterprises and in whole-class activities are always provided in modern curriculums organized in large units.

3. Correlation and Integration in the Language Program

A transitional step between the separate teaching of subjects and the increasingly accepted integrated approach, in which the social studies, language arts, and sciences are so interwoven and fused in a learning experience that they have lost their separate identities, is that of "correlation." Correlation might be defined as parallel teaching, in that subjects usually retain their identities, even though the contents and activities of the various lessons are closely related. For instance, history lessons may currently deal with pioneer life; literature about pioneers may engage the reading periods; the children may write and tell stories or act out pioneer scenes in their language classes; and they may, during the same week, study the spelling of the words needed in writing such stories. According to Gillett:

One of the most commonly used procedures is that of correlating the composition program with that of the content subjects, where language activities function in situations which are meaningful to children. Such desirable outcomes as an increased interest in composition as a tool necessary to the successful conduct of other school work, a new confidence on the part of the child who has something to say or to write, or the added interest in creative writing fostered by the program are difficult to appraise.¹⁰

A more nearly complete breakdown of subject-matter lines is characteristic of the integrated program. In 1936, Wrightstone wrote:

A characteristic practice of the newer-type schools is to integrate curricular activities around a center of interest, unit of work, or topic. Integration is emerging as an educational-psychological concept from several directions, but it is most apparent in the *Gestalt* psychological viewpoint. The theory is that pupils perceive more clearly ideas and their relationships which are unified in a

⁹ Mildred Dawson, "Traditional versus Progressive Practices in Teaching Language Usage," *Elementary English Review*, IX (March, 1932), 53-57, 79; Janet Riemann, "Individualization of Grammar in the Intermediate Grades," *Elementary English Review*, VIII (April, 1931), 91-94.

¹⁰ Norma Gillett, "A Correlated Curriculum in Composition and the Social Studies," *Elementary English Review*, XIV (March, 1937), 80.

major theme or topic, and that the study of ideas and relationships gives to the pupils deeper meanings and helps to create broader educational values. Thus growth in oral expression, reading, and spelling may develop from activities intrinsic to a unit or center.¹¹

An article by Cross reflects an interesting point of view in regard to the organization of language in an integrated curriculum. He reports:

Above the third grade the pupil's growth in language arts became the direct responsibility of the teacher of the social studies. In other words the school's contribution to pupil growth in the language arts—thinking, reading, speaking, or writing—became a responsibility of the social studies teacher. He assumed the job of teaching all the study skills and all the written and oral expression. This was in no sense of the word an attempt to make the language arts incidental to social studies. Rather the attempt was to put the language arts in a natural learning situation. The curriculum planning committees for language arts and social studies placed in the hands of each teacher of social studies a check list of the general grade expectancies in the language arts, and each teacher was made to feel as definitely as any special teacher of language arts her responsibilities for pupil growth in this field.¹²

It is important, in programs where social studies or natural science is made the center, *that the teaching of English should not be made incidental*, that language be taught in connection with all the child's activities, whether these are in or out of the schoolroom, and that careful and constant inventories of growth and emerging needs in language be made. A check list such as that advocated by Cross can be a distinct help in taking such an inventory.

Heffernan advocates an experience program where there is no question of priority for any one subject of the curriculum. Each subject and activity finds its place naturally in the educational experiences of the school day. She says:

The desire to communicate with others is a basic, human urge, and the modern school organizes its program to provide opportunity for growth in power to communicate by means of experiences worth talking about, and by permitting freedom of expression. . . . If language is really functioning in the life of the group of children there is little need for a separate period labeled "language arts." Language permeates the genuine interests and activities of the entire day.¹³

All schemes for integrating the program in language with the materials and activities of other curricular areas are designed to make the teaching

¹¹ J. Wayne Wrightstone, "Achievements in English Activity Programs," *Elementary English Review*, XIII (March, 1936), 94.

¹² A. J. Foy Cross, "A New Approach to Teaching the Language Arts," *Elementary English Review*, XV (March, 1938), 96.

¹³ Helen Heffernan, "Sharing Experiences in the Modern School," *Elementary English Review*, XVI (March, 1939), 107-8.

of English functional and lifelike. It is believed that such conditions are conducive to fluent expression of ideas and to greater effectiveness than is compartmentalized treatment. There is some experimental evidence to validate this belief:

A tentative answer has been provided to the questions of relative achievement in skills of reading, language, and spelling by pupils under older- and newer-type practices. The evidence here reported shows that superior achievement was tested in the primary grades and that equal, if not superior, attainment in the skills was maintained in the upper elementary grades. . . . A major hypothesis is implicit in the findings of this study. The newer practices are as adequate a medium as the older practices for the acquisition of skills and habits in various aspects of English.¹⁴

According to Hatfield and Barnes, the communication of ideas and the acquisition of language skills go hand in hand:

Since language is a social activity, a nexus of acts, habits, attitudes and skills, it follows that learning language and learning to improve in its use proceed through social activity. In general the method is as follows: language situations similar to those in life are created or merely encouraged to define themselves in the school. Pupils are thus impelled, by their own desires and for genuine communication motives, to engage in the language activity. Before they attempt production they are encouraged and guided in prevision; as they produce, and afterward, they study and analyze their success and failure. They observe and discuss phenomena of language, they study superior specimens (not "literary models" unless they are trying to write literature), they are made conscious of group reactions and criticisms to language. In short, they learn language by engaging in language under guidance and by utilizing the convenient means for improvement.¹⁵

Thus it appears that schools may vary in the details and even in the bases of organization of instruction and yet attain effective results in the language arts—always provided (1) the pupil's communication is clearly functional and (2) a definitely sequential treatment of language items, with emphasis on effective use of language, is constantly maintained. The available evidence leads members of the committee responsible for producing this yearbook to believe that, in general, the most effective organization of instruction in the elementary grades involves an integration of the language arts with all the other vital activities and interests of pupils. It must be recognized, however, that there are many teachers who are not yet able to give as effective instruction in language under such a unified organization of learning activities as they can and do give under a correlated or more traditional plan.

¹⁴ Wrightstone, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹⁵ *The Development of a Modern Program in English*, p. 28. Ninth Yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Washington: National Education Association, 1936.

CHAPTER VII

TEACHERS' METHODS IN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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The *best method* of teaching any subject *is always a person*.¹ In one classroom it is the listening attitude of the teacher which serves as a kind of magic under which students speak and write better than they had dreamed they could. In another room, the "just and sensitive appraisal"² of the teacher awakens a desire to improve and furnishes knowledge of how to improve. Knowing that their teacher also "writes"³ electrifies the efforts of the pupils in another group. A "conversational way of dealing with literature and suddenly coming out with the words of a book constitutes an educational sorcery"⁴ which captures the imaginations of youths and releases their own creative expression. Equally effective is a way of reading aloud, not only great literature, but also the work of boys and girls—reading aloud so that thought and emotion are conveyed by the tones and rhythm of the voice as effectively as if gestures and facial expressions were used. There is also inspiration and release of creative power in the teacher's becoming so emotionally identified with the pupils' learning situation that she and they are intent upon expressing ideas and feelings, unhampered by fear of failure, unconcerned over a mark for the recitation or the paper, and uninhibited by the pupils' inadequate mastery of the mechanics of language.

Subsequently in this chapter a few examples are given of the kind of teacher-pupil planning which stimulates pupil growth in language power.⁵ In these descriptive notes of different master teachers, the reader will

¹ J. Edgar Park, "On Saying What You Mean," *Essays on the Teaching of English, in Honor of Charles Swain Thomas*, p. 190. (Robert M. Gay, ed.) Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1940.

² Frances Lester Warner, "Uneasy English," *Essays on the Teaching of English*, p. 197. *Op. cit.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁵ The yearbook committee, and the author of this chapter particularly, regret that the limitations of space have made it impossible to present the numerous other illustrative units contributed by co-operating teachers from almost every section of the country.

be impressed first with their striking, individual characteristics. Yet in all their classrooms there are common elements to be observed: (1) rapport between teacher and pupils which facilitates natural communication; (2) assurance that the living teacher, if not the language textbook, is sensitive and flexible enough to supply whatever direct or indirect guidance is necessary to release the child's ideas or feelings; (3) a speaking or writing activity worth engaging in; (4) a goal that is attainable with reasonable attention and effort; (5) experience in the steps of creative thinking, discussing, and writing, so that the process is learned for independent personal use throughout life; (6) a reason to analyze an oral performance or a first written draft to find where it can be improved; (7) a purpose for practicing until improvement is achieved; and (8) satisfaction in sharing with classmates, schoolmates, and sometimes a larger public the product of a purposeful language activity.

Why do boys and girls work hard to improve a letter they are mailing to a real person? A play they are presenting to another class? A speech to promote a cause in which they believe? An assembly program for the school? A choral reading to be given as a public exercise in honor of the poet whose poems they are reciting? Why under such impacts do boys and girls develop skill in their use of language? The reason is that their efforts are *motivated* by the will to succeed, and that they are emotionally so stirred that their *self-consciousness* gives way to *idea-consciousness*.⁶

School life, in English as well as in the other subjects, is filled with strong purposes for clear oral discussion and for correct and effective writing. Every kind of language activity described by McKee in chapter ii is called for in schools from coast to coast. In Cheltenham, Pennsylvania,⁷ Long Beach, California,⁸ and in towns and cities lying east of Pennsylvania and west to California the schools are engaged in conducting vital experience in English.⁹

On the basis of an experimental program involving a small group of

⁶ Cf. Angela M. Broening, "Factors Influencing Success in Written English," *Practical Values of Educational Research*, pp. 51-54. Official Report. Washington: American Educational Research Association, 1938.

⁷ Cf. *As We Believe*, mimeographed report of the philosophy and activities in the Cheltenham Elementary Schools, compiled by Jessie B. Dotterer.

⁸ *Guide to the Teaching of Oral and Written Language in the Intermediate Grades*. Long Beach, 1940. (Mimeographed.)

⁹ Cf. Angela M. Broening (ed.), *Conducting Experiences in English*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939.

Cf. *Language Arts in the Elementary School*. Twentieth Yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals. Washington: National Education Association, 1941.

children and extending over a period of six years, the authors of *They All Want To Write*¹⁰ provide illuminating evidence of the stimulating effect on children of freedom to write creatively on topics of vital interest to themselves and their associates. Without quoting examples of the pupils' work, which were submitted as evidence of the soundness of the methods used, several statements are presented which represent conclusions these teachers arrived at from their experiment in teaching English.

The amount of practice needed is less when situations are real and the reasons for accuracy are clearly felt.¹¹

Experience in writing in response to sincere and natural needs is conducive to greater ease as well as higher standards of both form and content.¹²

It often seems wise to have a child, especially one who is weak in this field, read his material first to his teacher alone. If there are sentence errors the two may correct them together. Usually reading a passage aloud convinces a child that "it says too much," or "it doesn't sound finished." If he doesn't observe the weakness, the teacher points it out, gives him several examples of ways to repair the bad spot, and *sees that he does it*.¹³

Whether or not the rest of the group gets the point the child is trying to make in writing is the important thing—a test almost as tangible as seeing that a hand-made boat sails.¹⁴

Children should know a great deal before they begin to write. Days, even weeks of observing, analyzing, experimenting, talking, and reading preceded writing.¹⁵

The casual talking over of experience, reporting the results of one's exploration, is a vitally important stage in developing disciplined expression. Half-understood ideas, vague impressions, begin to take form through simple and informal talking about "what we found out" or "what we have done"! New questions arise. Relative values emerge. Some clarification takes place from this simplest verbalization of ideas.¹⁶

When writing is fun and children listen constructively to both story and comment, thus identifying themselves with the warp and woof of the tale and its quality, they become increasingly aware of what makes writing effective and inevitably their reactions are reflected in their own stories. Appreciative listening sharpens the urge for more writing and deepens the insight necessary for better writing.¹⁷

Another successful experiment in teaching language is described in detail with specimens of pupils' writing by De Lima.¹⁸ A few statements

¹⁰ Alvina Treut, Doris C. Jackson, June D. Ferebee, and Dorothy O. Saunders, *They All Want To Write*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1939.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁸ Agnes De Lima, *The Little Red School House*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1942.

are here quoted to indicate the conclusions drawn concerning methods of teaching.

The daily discussion period may or may not relate to the trip. Sometimes the children use it to plan a play; to report some event of importance; to discuss further a book they have all been reading; to tell of an adventure to and from school; to talk over some simple phase of science, perhaps nature study or zoölogy—there are almost always rabbits or turtles in the room. Or perhaps some question of behavior has come up and must be faced. Mostly the science discussions grow out of the trips—why do streamliners go faster than other locomotives, why don't iron boats sink? How does a steam engine work, what is a Diesel engine, what is the function of the third rail, why does oil float on the water in the river? Expansion and contraction of railroad steel—the geology of Manhattan—why skyscrapers are placed on one part and not another—the necessity for a rock foundation.¹⁹

Sometimes the discussions will take the form of a group story or poem based on a vivid experience. The children talk spontaneously each in turn and the teacher writes down what they say. She interrupts only if the talk is becoming stereotyped or if the children are tending to use hackneyed or patterned phrases. At the end of the talk the teacher may read her notes back to the group for changes or corrections. Sometimes a child will ask the teacher to set down his individual story. A noteworthy collection of poems, stories, and essays is assembled by the group in this fashion each year.

Spelling is taught through writing original stories and poems. The children are encouraged to spell or use sign language without appealing to the teacher at the moment of writing. The reason for this is that inspiration is easily killed by too much concentration on the spelling.

After a story is written the teacher corrects the spelling and the child copies it neatly, with corrections. The ability to spell increases in ratio to the amount of time spent on creative writing.

Spelling exercises once or twice a week make the children alert and conscious of word similarities, endings, etc., but no words are learned from lists. Before going to camp the children make small dictionaries of the words they think they need for letter writing.²⁰

As may be expected, this grappling with experiences and problems at first-hand results in creative writing of real vitality. Thoreau has said, "Expression is the act of the whole man, that our speech may be vascular. The intellect is powerless to express thought without the aid of heart and liver and every member."

We do not have to invent topics for English themes. Nor do we just say amiably, "Write about anything you please." Rather we see to it that our children have a wealth of experience out of which writing can naturally flow. The first assignments may be very simple—five-finger exercises. The children may be asked to describe some aspects of the city, the ferry, the street outside home or school, the playground. Next the children may try to reproduce conversation, to catch the rhythm of speech and accent. Then come the records of what they have

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

seen, felt, or heard on the trips. These reports are not mere recitals—"We went. . . . We saw. . . ." The attempt is made to reproduce the experience in all its aspects. The children learn how to use detail, how to point up an incident, how to use words much as one uses color in painting. They learn thus to remember what they have seen and to appraise each part of the experience for what it is worth. The report may later be worked into a story, a poem, a play, a radio script. "The Land" was written following several trips made during June camp to the valley of the Rondout Creek, near Lackawack, where a dam is being built to impound New York's future water supply. Here was human tragedy in the valley behind the damsite, where villages, farmhouses, even graveyards, will have to be removed so that the area may be made into a reservoir.

We help our children also to tap their personal lives for material to write about. The thirteen-year-old is interested in looking at himself. He is beginning to develop a measure of objectivity and he likes to compare himself with what he was two or three years ago. He is eager to analyze his personal problems, quite willing to write about them and thus see them in a new perspective. The whole question of personal relationships is pressing at this age. Parental influence is beginning to wane. The more mature children are trying very consciously to be self-directing. Friendship and dislike are both on a more subtle plane but of increasing importance. Cliques develop among girls, and the stigma of being excluded is keenly felt. Interest in the opposite sex is growing, but there are still many in the group not yet mature enough for much of "that sort of thing." New curiosities about the whole problem of social relations are developing, and a growing self-consciousness about the whole matter. It takes little prodding by the teacher for children at this age to write freely and often most revealingly of their problems and desires.

We do not, of course, limit our children to immediate experiences for their material. There is ample place all along the line for flights of imagination, for poetry, and for that high delight of adolescence—caricature and farce. But we do try to help them to use writing as naturally and freely as speech, to take it out of the realm of the precocious or the esoteric and make it a flexible, vital, and satisfying means at once of expressing and enriching what they have experienced.²¹

I. ILLUSTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The following accounts of lessons or school experiences illustrate some of the principles of instructional methods that teachers are using to develop the tendencies and capacities of their pupils to speak and to write more effectively. The brevity of these reports will, however, require that the reader use his creative imagination to visualize boys and girls of the age-grade group indicated at work under the stimulus of a dynamic teacher who knows child interests and needs as well as she knows the English language.

The first report shows how the play activities of primary-grade chil-

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 116-17.

dren may be used to motivate effective practice in the making of difficult speech sounds.

WORDS TAKE WING²²

In connection with a study of airplanes, the children had been enjoying a little airplane game from *Games and Jingles for Speech Development*, by Barrows and Hall. This seemed very timely, for several of the children were having difficulty in distinguishing between the "b" and "v" sounds and had found it necessary at first to hold the upper lip with the fingers in order to be sure a "v"—rather than a "b"—sound was made.

The following poem was used: (Barrows and Hall, p. 34)

"Airplane, airplane in the sky!
V
Flying, flying up so high!
V
Take me with you when you fly!
V
I would like to sail the sky!
V"

The children who made the most accurate motor-humming sounds were allowed to "fly" their airplanes while the rest listened, watched, and then practiced again.

After we had used this poem for a week or two and the children had become quite familiar with it, the teacher asked if they would like to make up their own "airplane story." (The group had previously written a number of co-operative stories, many of which contained interesting "sound" words.)

The teacher was soon busy writing the new story on the board as the children worked it out after watching one of the boys "take off," "fly," and "land" his plane several times. (Notice that the "v" sound was included, for it now seemed to belong with every plane flight.)

"V
Gun your engine!
V
Gun your engine!
V
Up you go!
Up you go!
Fly in the wind.
Fly in the sky.
V
Down you come
And now you land."

²² Reported by Eleanor Hunt, Kingsbury School, Redlands, California.

The children enjoyed the "feel" of the airplane flight and really worked diligently to secure the proper motor sound. They were even found using the story—or parts of it—as they "flew" their planes during dramatic play.

The lesson proved of value in stimulating the production of a correct speech form, as well as in bringing about the writing of a creative story, which further served to enrich the children's experiences and to provide purposeful reading material.

Airplanes—real ones and toys—give young and old much to talk about. The next report tells how a first-grade teacher used the children's interest in some of their normal life experiences to stimulate growth in language.

LANGUAGE-ARTS ACTIVITIES IN FIRST GRADE²³

I am a first-grade teacher in the Lapham School at Madison. Last year I had an enrolment of thirty-two boys and girls.

At the beginning of the school year I encourage the children to bring toys to school. I feel it is one way of bringing the home into the school and a step up the ladder for self-expression. They show their toys, they talk about them, and they answer questions.

It was at the opening of the last school year that many airplanes were brought to the classroom. Interest was at its peak. Someone said, "Let's make an airport." So out came the blocks and before long we had an airport. Airplanes zoomed around. One day while the children were enjoying the airport, Peter called to me and said, "You had better write something down." When I asked him what he wanted me to write, his answer was:

Extra! Extra!

Airplane crashed.

Front end of the airport was blocked.

Only one *man* saw the crash.

And Peter was the *man*, not the boy. I then called the class together and asked them if they could create a poem about airplanes. This was their contribution:

Airplane! Airplane!

Up in the sky

So high! So high!

I was delighted with the rhythm. It might be well for me to say that at the very beginning of school we said many rhymes and jingles. I passed out large sheets of paper and the children took paints or crayons and followed along with rhythmic lines.

Stephen, a very shy little fellow, was very much interested in airplanes for his brother Art was in the Air Corps and, furthermore, he was home on furlough. Stephen asked brother Art to come to school and talk to the group. His talk was

²³ Reported by Clara E. Bevers, Madison, Wisconsin.

most interesting. I was surprised at some of the questions the children asked Art. After Art left our room, the class told me to record the following sentences: (These were recorded on a chart.)

Art came to our room.
Art is a soldier.
He is a sergeant.
He is stationed at Scott Field.
He is learning about radios.
He puts radios in airplanes.
Art joined the Air Corps before Pearl Harbor was bombed.
He had the Air Corps insignia on his sleeve.
He has a ten-day furlough.
That is why he is here.

I was especially interested in the children's vocabulary. I am sure many children added to their vocabulary through these sentences.

Several other soldiers came to visit us and more stories were recorded on charts.

We also did much creative writing in connection with our art lessons. One day the children came back from the art room just thrilled with the turkeys they had painted on 18" × 24" paper. Oh! they were big, big turkeys. Interest was unusually high. They were just "filled with turkey," so here are several poems they created.

Turkey! Turkey!
With your wattle, wattle, wattle.
How did you get in here?
Gobble, gobble, gobble.

Pickety-pick goes the turkey.
Why do you pickety-pick so much?

Turkey with your pretty feathers.
Why do you wobble, wobble, wobble?
How did you get in here, too?
Gobble, gobble, gobble.

Later in the school year the children enjoyed telling about their experiences. After they had told the class their interesting experiences, the listeners told me what to write and the many interesting experiences were recorded on charts. Here are several.

Dick's Trip to Chicago

All aboard! All aboard!
Mother, Dick, and John got on the train.
Dick and John were very happy.
It was their first ride on the "400."
John liked to walk up and down the aisle.
A soldier gave John a stick of gum.

But John did not have the gum very long.
Guess what happened?
He swallowed the gum!
Oh! John! You funny boy.

A Joke on Bobby

Bobby had a loose tooth.
But he did not pull it.
One day Bobby's tooth was not in his mouth.
Where was Bobby's tooth?
Mother and Bobby looked and looked.
Guess where they found it?
It was on the floor.
Bobby thinks the tooth came out when he was eating an apple.

National holidays contribute an opportunity for varied language experiences. An illustration is afforded in the following discussion of why we celebrate Thanksgiving, with its related activities of interpreting pictures, planning a play, acting the play, and serving refreshments.

THANKSGIVING²⁴

- I. Objective: To help the first-grade children have some idea of the reason for our observing yearly a national Thanksgiving Day.
- II. Activities:
 - A. Discussion of the following questions:
 1. What special day comes in November?
 2. What do we mean by Thanksgiving?
 3. Why do we have a special Thanksgiving Day?
 4. Who observed the first Thanksgiving Day?
 - B. The story of the first Thanksgiving was told to the children, with pictures being used to clarify the story. Discussion followed as to the customs and the costumes of the Pilgrims and the Indians. As an outgrowth of the discussion the children decided to have a play, re-creating the story.
 - C. Talking over the different scenes which might be portrayed led to the following suggestions:

Scene 1: Discussing the reason why such a day should be observed
Scene 2: Asking the women about the dinner
Scene 3: Hunting the turkeys
Scene 4: Inviting the Indians
Scene 5: Preparing the dinner
Scene 6: Partaking of the dinner

²⁴ Reported by Bertha Robinson, Supervisor, Laboratory School, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas.

- D. As the children discussed their ideas of the settings and the conversations, the teacher made definite notes of the children's suggestions and the ways they were expressed. Naturally much of the conversation was different at the final presentation from that expressed during the planning period.
 - E. Costuming included paper collars, cuffs, hats, and aprons for the Pilgrims and several of the children had Indian costumes. Stage properties were limited but sufficient.
 - F. Rehearsal of the play.
 - G. Preparation of an invitation to the parents for an afternoon's visit to see some of the day's regular work and then see the play. (The invitation to the parents was dictated by the children, written in manuscript writing on the blackboard by the teacher, read by the children, and a copy for each child made by the teacher.)
 - H. After discussing the food of the Pilgrims, the children decided that perhaps molasses cookies were more nearly like those a Pilgrim child would have had, so molasses cookies were planned as refreshments for the parents at the close of the play.
 - I. The recipe was printed on a large sheet of paper and read several times by the children before the cookies were made. During the making, each item was carefully checked as it was added to the cooky batter.
- III. Outcome: Many original ideas were expressed by the children as to the words to be used and how they should be expressed. Even shy, retiring children volunteered to say a few words during the play.
-

The following report suggests a number of different approaches to expressional activities and outlines one procedure for teaching children to begin to understand and use a dictionary.

VOCABULARY BUILDING IN THIRD GRADE²⁵

In a school such as Lincoln, where the children are especially handicapped in the language field, the techniques and emphasis are in oral work and in building into the children's background rich experiences and activities that free their tongues and, through sheer interest, help them to hurdle the difficulty of using English words.

After a good dramatic play period there is always a splendid opportunity for oral language.

Such questions as, "What adventure did any of you have today?" "Did you sell anything in the market this week?" "What did you do last Saturday?" usually bring some interesting response, which, if capitalized, grows immediately into something worth while.

²⁵ Reported by Zelma Flanagan, Lincoln School, Redlands, California.

The bringing of an offering such as a shell, a bug, or a stone may lead, under skilful guidance of the teacher, into the composition of a story or a poem.

The more technical skills, such as those that arise when stories are put into writing, are motivated by the desire of the children to do independent work and to write their own stories.

Letters of invitation and thank-yous for favors and help are also sources of motivation for drill.

The making of a "movie" or series of pictures to illustrate a story or a unit may necessitate a written footnote or a running dialogue to accompany it.

In studying Mexico, the children of Lincoln School love to dramatize the stories read to them, such as "Marcos" by Melicent Humason Lee. In playing the part of Marcos as he visits the charcoal burner's hut, the child forgets to be Johnny or Mary, and the class, in guessing what he is doing and unconsciously adopting some of the vocabulary of the text, do not realize that they are having a language lesson.

A unit on Mexico always presents many new words to the child. This offers an excellent opportunity for vocabulary building and a stimulus that leads to the functioning of almost all of the language arts in a real life situation. Spanish words will be needed, and the best way to make them available is through making a dictionary. A simple Spanish-English dictionary is written by the children as each new word is needed in dramatic play or introduced through a story or book.

This activity offers opportunity for arousing consciousness of the alphabet and letter sounds, experience in formulating definitions, and care in writing and spelling. Through co-operative stories about some of the words, clearness and sometimes even a literary flavor is achieved.

At the beginning of the unit each child is given a book of blank pages—one page for each of the twenty-six letters. These books should be simple. The children may make them themselves by lacing loose pages together with raffia. Each page is then lettered in manuscript writing with its respective letter. This making of a dictionary is more meaningful if several Spanish words have already been introduced and the child himself feels the need for some means of keeping them. For instance, the words *sombrero* and *reboso* will be used almost at once. As the word and its definition are recorded, the word may also be illustrated by the child. Words are entered only as needed—one or two at a time. A large classbook may also be made for the library table.

Some of the words recorded in this way have been:

Adios, Aztec	Iztaccihuatl	Reboso
Burro, Buenas, Brasero	Jarabe	Serape, Si
Casa, Charro, Cortes	Lapiz	Tortilla
Dias	Manna, metate, Mayas	Vamos
Estralita, escuela	Noche	Xochimilco
Fiesta, frijoles	Olla	Yucatan
Gracias	Popocatepetl	Zacate
Hombre, Huaraches, Hidalgo	Que	

Social studies offer excellent opportunities for language growth. The content is interesting, can be experienced at first-hand, through pictures and maps, and through interestingly written books. Much discussion, planning, and reporting grow naturally out of this wealth of vital ideas. The following illustration shows how language growth can be secured while social concepts are being developed.

CHINA: AN EXPERIENCE THROUGH LITERATURE²⁶

I. The objectives:

- A. To develop the children's interest in and sympathy for the peoples of China
- B. To acquaint the children with the wealth of children's literature from and about China
- C. To capitalize on the many experiences in language which would rise, naturally, from a unit of work on China.

II. The approach:

Since this unit of work was to be only one part of a larger unit entitled "Our Neighbors: The Children of the World," the larger unit was introduced first. This was done by means of a large, gaily painted map of the world, the borders of which were decorated with the many literary characters the children would become acquainted with during the course of the unit. The children almost immediately recognized Ping, the little duck who lived on the Yangtse River in Marjorie Flack's story *Ping*. They were also familiar with the "Five Chinese Brothers" from Claire Bishop's book of the same name. One child suggested that China would be an excellent starting-off place for our unit "because China was probably the oldest of all our neighboring countries." Another child quickly agreed, pointing out, too, that if we did start with China, we would begin in the east and come westward "just as the sun did!"

The idea of making a Chinese exhibit was then introduced by the teacher. She first presented a rhyme from I. T. Headland's collection of Chinese nursery rhymes, and then showed the children how she had lettered and illustrated it on a large sheet of paper. She said the rhyme sheet would serve very well as a temporary background for a Chinese exhibit table. She then mentioned some of the fine books from and about China which she would bring for the table, and described some of the unusual and exciting articles which would "feel right at home" with these books. She encouraged the children to look about for stories, books, rhymes, poems, and other articles which would fit into the study of Chinese boys and girls. The children responded with much enthusiasm, their interest was aroused, and the unit was on its way!

²⁶ A unit of work carried out in the third and fourth grades. Reported by Alice Nichols, Roosevelt School, Detroit, Michigan.

III. The activities:

A. Literary experiences

1. The teacher read aloud to the children the traditional and modern literature which she felt to be high in literary quality but which, while particularly appealing to this age level, was too difficult for the children to read alone with pleasure and profit.
2. The teacher introduced for individual reading in the library corner those books which she felt the child could read with pleasure and profit.
3. The children shared their favorite passages, poems, and rhymes by reading them aloud to their classmates.

B. Oral language experiences directly related to the literary experiences

1. The children associated literary characters and events with those characters and events with which they were already familiar, and with their own personal experiences.

Two types of experiences were discussed:

- a. Those habits and customs of the Chinese which seemed peculiar or strange to American children. The class discussion tried to resolve the reason for such customs. For example, when in Pearl Buck's *The Chinese Children Next Door*, the father "smelled" his children's cheeks, the boys and girls understood that this action was a substitute for the traditional American gesture of affection and probably a reasonable one!
- b. Those experiences which are universal to childhood; e.g., Lifu's naïve belief that he could learn to write in a day (Lattimore's *The Questions of Lifu*), or Mei Li's delight in having her very own money to spend at the New Year's fair (Handforth's *Mei Li*).
2. The children told their classmates about the individual reading they had done, both in the books presented by the teacher and in the books they themselves had found in the school library, the public library, or at home.
3. The children shared their favorite illustrations by showing them and telling about them.
4. The children learned to say some of the Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes (and how to play them, too!). They compared them with our nursery rhymes.
5. The children did some choral speaking in their effort to express artistically a favorite Chinese lullaby.
6. The children retold the story of the Chinese willow plate. As one child put it, "We should all know how to tell this story. We've been eating off these plates for years, and didn't even know there was a story on them!"
7. The children gave a mock radio dramatization of *The Five Chinese Brothers* by C. H. Bishop. While the script was prepared by the teacher, the children interpreted it themselves, worked out the sound

effects, and selected the children best fitted to impersonate the various characters.

C. Other oral language experiences

1. Before placing anything on the exhibit table, the children told their classmates "all about it."
2. Because members of other classes wished to contribute to the Chinese exhibit, children looked at the table every day for any such outside contributions which they might want to talk about or to ask questions about.
3. The children compared Chinese music with better-known music after listening to Chinese musical recordings.
4. The children discussed, informally, Chinese customs and traditions; also, the contributions made to world civilization by the Chinese.

D. Written language experiences

1. Having been told that there was an old Chinese folk tale depicted on the willow plate, the children examined the plates and tried to guess what that story might be. Their guesses found outlet in
 - a. Individually written stories which found their way into a book entitled "Our Willow Plate Stories."
 - b. The following group or co-operative story which, when lettered on a large sheet of paper, replaced the rhyme sheet as the background for the exhibit table:

The Story on the Plate

Once upon a time in China there were two boys named Little Pear and Little Ping. They were playing one day under the willow tree. Just then two birds appeared over the tree tops. They flew down to the children. The first bird carried a message. Little Ping took it from its leg. They took it to Hung Chung, and Hung Chung read it. The note said that their father was coming from across the sea with surprises for all three! Pear and Ping jumped up and down with joy while Hung Chung tried to calm them. Just then they saw a little speck coming down the river. They ran across the bridge to meet the boat. As the boat came nearer, they could see their father and they waved to him with willow branches. They waved so hard that Little Ping fell in the water and had to swim to the boat. When they reached shore, father gave them their presents. He had a pair of chopsticks, five tang hurlurs, and a dragon kite for each!

2. Because the children wished copies of some of the poems and rhymes read during the course of the unit, they found it necessary to learn how to copy poetry correctly.

IV. The outcomes:

- A. The teacher felt that the children had an even greater interest in, sympathy for, and understanding of their Chinese neighbors.

1. They recognized the many things we had in common. For example, one child said, "Just imagine the Chinese people having nursery rhymes almost exactly like ours!" Another child said, "They have a candy man too!"
 2. They developed an understanding and appreciation of the differences in Chinese and American culture. One child said, "The rhythm in that Chinese march is funny, but then our marches would sound funny to the Chinese children."
 - B. The children not only derived much aesthetic pleasure in becoming acquainted with a wealth and variety of good literature from and about China, but also their reading tastes were improved.
 - C. In developing the many language activities, the children acquired some of those skills of effective writing and speech which are essential to the furtherance of democratic ideals.
-

In many schools the assembly programs are utilized as a means of providing opportunities for group experience in creative expression. The following report includes an example of group writing developed by a fourth-grade class.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS^{26a}

The faculty of Tuttle School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, has been very successful with a composite type of auditorium program. A central theme, such as a paper sale, a scrap drive, Memorial Day, Armistice Day, good health, etc., is worked out by a faculty committee and the outline presented to the classes.

Each class chooses the phase of the subject it desires to develop. Then, through class discussion, a composite effort is produced. The children decide the most effective way of staging or presenting the material.

A building rehearsal is then held and these units integrated and put into smooth working order.

The final performance is announced, directed, and carried through in all details by the children.

This can be illustrated by the following composite contribution of a fourth-grade class.

What Can We Do To Win the War?

One hundred million Americans have but one thought, one purpose—VICTORY!

We are learning the meaning of co-operation. We buy war bonds and stamps. We ration our food, our gasoline, our tires. We are trying to accept this rationing cheerfully, knowing that our sacrifice is small when compared to that of the men and women in the service.

We volunteer for Civilian Defense jobs, for U.S.O. service, for the Red Cross, for War Chest drives, and for many other causes connected with the war effort.

We are learning the meaning of Conservation. We give our rubber, our scrap

^{26a} Reported by Norma I. Verbeck, Tuttle School, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

metal, our kitchen fats, our tin foil, and tin cans to be salvaged for needed war materials.

We are trying to conserve food; to eat what is plentiful; and to keep healthy so that we may be able to do more work for our country. We know that we must not hoard food but be willing to take only our fair share.

We are grateful that we may live in such a wonderful nation as the United States of America, and will try to be worthy of this great privilege.

Activities rich in language outcomes may be stimulated by the enjoyment of a story or a poem, as well as by an interesting experience or a challenging problem in social living. The following report indicates how, in spite of great diversity in the home and language backgrounds of her pupils, an alert teacher was able, through presenting a literary expression having universal interest, to initiate a large amount of instruction and practice in written communication.

LETTER-WRITING EXPERIENCE OF FIFTH-GRADE CLASS²⁷

a) *Motivation.* At this time, when the morale of our armed forces is dependent, to a degree, upon news from home, letter-writing becomes a very important art and accomplishment.

A perfectly natural situation brought about the following correspondence in a fifth-grade of mixed races and nationalities—Negro and white, Chinese, Hawaiian, Mexican, Filipino, Greek, and Italian. At home many of the children spoke the native tongue of their parents. To overcome this language handicap, emphasis was placed upon choric verse and verse choir work. Because the school was near an airport, the rhythm of the verses was often interrupted by the zoom of planes overhead. While the children waited for the plane to pass, one of them would remark, "It's a PBY," or "There goes an interceptor," or "It's a bomber, a B-24."

The combined interest in verse and planes continued.

b) *Activities.* There came to the teacher's attention the poem "High Flight." Before presenting it to the class, she told them about the author, John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

"John was born in Shanghai, China, where his father was an American missionary. His father is now Assistant Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington. John, Jr., was always interested in planes, just as you all are. As soon as he was old enough, he learned to fly. One day, while soaring up above the clouds, the words of the poem "High Flight" came to his mind. He wrote them down for his parents. When he was eighteen John joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. On December 15, 1941, he was killed in action in the skies over England."

²⁷ Reported by Ruth Keeney, teacher, Logan Elementary School, San Diego, California.

High Flight

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there
I've chased the shouting wind along and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew;
And while, with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high, untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

The story about the life of the author, John Gillespie Magee, Jr., and the words of his beautiful poem, caught the immediate interest of the class. They enthusiastically memorized the words. Some one suggested that letters should be written to Rev. Magee, expressing appreciation of his son's poem.

The letters were written and mailed. By air-mail there came the following reply, with enclosures:

Washington, D.C.

May 23, 1942.

To: Allen Lee Parrish,
Jacqueline McDowell,
Eugene Rodriguez,
Eleanor Orth,

Peter Rodriquez,
Fausto Amargo,
Billy Sheng,
Gloria Ravettino,
and others

Dear Friends:

My husband and I have been very much pleased to receive your letters and to know that you have been learning our son's poem, "High Flight," by heart. It makes us happy to know that you have done this and that you feel the beauty of the poem. I hope it will remain with you all of your lives. Perhaps some of you, later on, will be piloting planes. If, and when, you do, I hope that you may feel that you are flying "near to God" as our boy seems to have felt.

I was so glad to hear about your school and about the different nationalities represented in your grade. I think you can all be doing something for world unity by getting to know one another now, in school, and by learning to understand something of the point of view of the different races represented among you. You may like to know that our son, John, was also educated in rather an International way. He was born in China, and his first school was a Chinese Kindergarten. During a long summer in Japan he attended a Japanese Kindergarten. On our return to China he attended a British school in Shanghai and later was a pupil in an American school in Nanking. Thus, you see, he too had the privilege of meeting and knowing students from other countries.

I am sending you a copy of a speech that was made in Congress on Abraham Lincoln's birthday. In the speech a beautiful tribute is paid to our son's poem, "High Flight." I think you will like to read what was said.

One of you asked if there were other poems of our son's that we could send so that you can learn them. At present we are not able to send any. You may like to know that a memoir is being prepared to be published in the fall, under the title "Sunward I've Climbed." Besides the Congressional Record I am sending you a copy of "Young Wings," a magazine published by the Junior Literary Guild. This magazine also published "High Flight" and there is so much of interest in the magazine that I am glad to forward you a copy.

Again thanking you for your very nice letters,

Sincerely,
Faith Magee
(Mrs. John G.)

From the enclosures sent by Mrs. Magee the class learned that John had a thirteen-year-old brother named Christopher. They decided to write to him. A tremendously interesting series of letters were exchanged.

A large percentage of the children who carried on correspondence with Christopher have not only kept on writing to him, but are also writing now to their own fathers, big brothers, and friends in the armed forces.

It is not necessary for all the children to be equal in maturity and achievement in order to carry on an effective program of language development. The following report is typical of many that have been prepared in recent years by alert teachers of children having widely different backgrounds of experience and instruction.

A MEANINGFUL EXCURSION²⁸

I. Objective

Learning to express one's self more effectively in the classroom, on the playground, in the home, and in various parts of the community. Contact with the community and the use of its resources to stimulate and motivate activities of thinking, speaking, and writing are of inestimable value.

II. Source of motivation

The children in a multigraded school were studying their community. Since dairying is one of the principal industries of the community, the group was eager to know more about it. Some general reading material was available, but the older children wanted to know more about the processing and care of milk. They felt that much of this information could be obtained first-hand through an excursion to a dairy. In order to obtain permission to make such an excursion they needed to know how to write a business letter.

²⁸ Reported by Olga Locke Reed, general supervisor, Santa Barbara County, California.

III. Teaching-learning activities

All the children worked on the problem together. One of the older children wrote the parts of the letter on the board with helpful suggestions from the group. He wrote it in manuscript, so that the younger children could read it more readily. Ideas of what the body of the letter might contain were listed by a child, with the group assisting. The older children wrote individual letters, some requesting more books and pamphlets from the library. These they had found in the booklist. Others wrote requesting information on available movies, charts, graphs, and pictures which were listed in the audio-visual aids catalogue. Still others wrote for free or inexpensive materials which they had located in the curriculum laboratory, while a few wrote directly to the dairy asking for more specialized information.

All of the letters were to be mailed. Each child learned how to address an envelope, and where to place the stamp. Each mailed his own letter.

The younger children wrote a co-operative letter to the dairy asking for permission for all the children to visit.

There were certain words which were found to be common to the whole group. The primary children learned the first six words in the following list; the older children acquired them all. They were: dairy, milk, cows, please, visit, California, process, pasteurize, sterilize, sanitation.

This was the first excursion of the year. The children worked on the plan. They discussed the visit and its purpose, listing the questions they wished to ask the dairymen and the things they wished to see. They did a great deal of background reading so that they would be familiar with a dairy. The younger group looked at pictures, read, discussed, and dramatized their understanding of how milk was produced. One of the little children in dramatic play said his cow gave buttermilk. Another child said, in explanation of her pantomime, that she had just milked the bull. It seemed probable that the excursion would help to clarify both of these erroneous ideas. Each child had one or more questions which he hoped to have answered at the dairy.

Proper behavior during an excursion was also discussed. The children set up their standards.

A small committee of children went to the dairy and interviewed the dairyman to see whether the excursion was well planned and would be worth while.

Following the excursion, the children discussed their findings, exchanged ideas, and evaluated what they had seen. Primary and older children alike supplemented the excursion with both silent and oral reading and by recording and reading original accounts of their experiences.

The little children developed co-operative stories about their visit to the dairy which were made into "reading charts." The older children summarized the notes they had taken on their visit; these they read to the dairyman to check for accuracy, and listed further questions to be answered by research in the library and from the materials for which they had sent.

Thank-you letters were written to those who had helped to make the excursion a success.

The pictures and materials which came from the visual-aids department and the library were helpfully labeled and exhibited by the children. Some of them were used by individual children to clarify special problems.

The little children were able to play in their classroom "dairy" more realistically and with greater enthusiasm.

The excursion provided many opportunities for vocabulary enrichment and helped each child to develop a personal desire to acquire the words he needed. New words needed in each upper-grade child's vocabulary included: sterilization, sanitation, inspector, sugar-beet pulp, silage, separator, cooler, sterilizer, etc. These were recorded by each child who wanted to use them, and drill was given until he had mastered their spelling and use. Interest took much of the drudgery out of the necessary drill.

IV. Outcomes

The children saw the functional operation of the place visited as a phase of a general community process, and had a clearer understanding of how people make a living. In gaining this information, they acquired greater skill in using oral and written English to seek information, to obtain a favor, to clarify their ideas, and to express appreciation to people who helped them.

How other school work contributes to language growth on the part of pupils is illustrated by the following report of activities engaged in by a class in elementary science.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE THROUGH SCIENCE²⁹

I. General purpose

Improving the standard of spontaneous oral and written expression through the study of spiders in natural science.

The following unit will extend over several half-hour periods in our platoon school.

II. Equipment

1. Modern science stories—various sets of texts (ranging from two or three to a dozen or more copies per set) with informative colored illustrations and diagrams showing habitat, type of home, methods of securing food, and identifying characteristics of several varieties of spiders and their egg balls.
2. Card catalogue (child-made) of pertinent subjects on our units, found in our own room books.
3. Delineoscope and dark shades on windows.
4. Composition paper (cut to delineoscope size) and writing pens.

III. Objectives of each child

1. To become generally acquainted with spiders as a class, and specifically informed on some one variety.

²⁹ Reported by Mabel P. Hammersley, teacher of natural sciences, Emerson School, Madison, Wisconsin.

2. To increase fluency and correctness of expression through opportunity to report information not definitely known by classmates.
3. To work toward correction of his own common errors in English usage.

IV. Procedure

1. Class discussion to provoke thought, inspire curiosity, and create reading readiness, raising many questions to be settled later by reading and by observation from visual aids or from actual specimens.

Typical preparatory questions with a sample of answers needing follow-up work include:

- a. How many legs has a spider? How long are they?
 - 1) Jack: "I *seen* a spider that had *real* long legs, and a *real* small body . . . !"
 - 2) Tom: "I saw a spider *and* it was black, *and* it had *little bits of* short legs, and a red spot under it."
- b. Have you ever seen a white spider? a yellow one?
- c. What do you know about a "black widow"? Why is she called that?
- d. How does any spider come to be called a "wolf" spider?
- e. What kinds of spider homes have you seen?
 - 1) Joe: "There was one in our little spruce tree. It was silvery in the sunshine, *hooked in* between the branches."
- f. Could a spider ever carry little sticks and glue them together into a little house? Does he?
- g. Have you ever seen a spider really open a door to her house, walk in, and securely close it behind her?
- h. Where would a spider put her eggs? Would she take care of them? of her babies?
2. Class inventory of errors in oral expression:
 - a. Jack's "seen" and "real"
 - b. Tom's "ands"
 - c. Joe's "hooked in"
 - d. Tom's "little bits of"
3. Formulation of working outline on board to set up scope of information sought
4. Individual reading

The teacher sees that each child is provided with material he will enjoy working out, gives aid where needed, and makes sure that even the slow reader has grasped some fascinating fact to relate or has found a picture he can explain from his book.

5. Oral presentation

In darkened room, aided by their pictures or diagrams flashed on screen, even the more timid children will often become animated about their spiders. Other children of the group, working from same sources, will tell additional things until the spider is well reported.

Talks from other groups of children and other books follow, until several spiders have been presented, and each child has contributed to some picture.

Since the thrill of telling must not be marred, corrections so far are casually but persistently made either when errors occur or when a child completes his effort.

6. Talking on paper.
 - a. Write at least three unusual or interesting facts about your spider.
 - b. Check capitals, periods, spelling, sentences.
7. Flashing of papers on screen with delineoscope. Commendation of neatness and general arrangement, of picturesque phrases, of lack of errors, of Tom's mastery of "and" situation, and of Jack's "real" trouble. Mentioning of errors and need for improvement.
8. Learning process carried further by means of
 - a. Further visual aids: movie on "Trap-door Spider"; sets of pictures from *National Geographic* or *Nature Magazine*.
 - b. First-hand information from child's own specimens: a lycosa with her numerous midgets piled on her back; a hatching egg ball with minute adults scurrying busily along fine web lines thrown to far sides of a 12" × 18" terrarium, frantically spinning more and more lines; a spider suspended from a pencil, going up and down on his line.
9. Presentation of talks in auditorium to another grade.

The following report on the writing and presentation of a class play discloses the variety of strongly motivated situations with which creative work of this kind enriches the developmental experiences of pupils with respect to the improvement of their powers of expression.

PRODUCING THE CLASS PLAY³⁰

In the spring of 1942 my eighth-grade pupils and I decided that we were tired of the same old type of graduation program—recitation, music, and speaker. We decided to write a play and present it to parents and friends. It was called "America Sings" and was the story of music in our country.

This spring we wrote and produced "The Seasoning in the Melting Pot," a play written in the form of a panel discussion sprinkled with music and dancing. Our play showed that every nation that sent emigrants to America sent something good with them, and that is why our United States has become the greatest nation in the world.

We decided upon the subject for our play during an English period, and we listed the countries and groups of people which we thought should be included. Each child then selected the country which he would represent. It was up to him to find as much history as possible of that country, to find out exactly what that nation gave to America, and to learn of her music. It was, of course, necessary to write to our County Co-operative Library, to the Library Extension Division of the Pennsylvania State Library, and to friends and educators for material. This was another excellent opportunity to improve our letter writing.

Two weeks were allowed to gather this material. During that time the teacher

³⁰ Reported by Margaret Seylor, Passer School, Cooperburg, Pennsylvania.

was available for guidance and consultation. At the end of the two weeks the class was divided into small committees and each group wrote a part of the play. After reading and discussion of the separate parts, the manuscript was given to one of the pupils especially talented and she re-wrote it into its finished form.

The play lasted one and one-fourth hours. It told what each nation did to build America. It showed habits, customs, foods, etc., which we inherited from our mother countries. It showed that children are children all over the world and that we have no right to despise a child because he is a German, a Jew, or a Japanese. It placed special emphasis on the story of the Pennsylvania Germans in Bucks County because we are in a Pennsylvania German community. Some of the things discussed by the children were:

The beauty and benefits of music
Famous European composers
How America got her name
The beauties of Pennsylvania
Education and the immigrants from various nations
Henry Steigel
Our Negro citizens
People of the Orient in America—chop suey, is it Chinese?

Our play included vocal and instrumental numbers, a Polish Dance, a pantomime, etc. It ended when the children sang a little Hungarian patriotic song, "Raise Our Flag," which is beautiful in any language. The leader then invited everyone to join in giving the Pledge to the Flag and in singing the "Star-Spangled Banner."

Language experience is the invaluable outcome of pupil responsibility for preparing and publishing the school newspaper. The nature of this experience is effectively described in the following report of the work of sixth-grade pupils in the laboratory school of a teachers college.

THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER AS A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE³¹

A major advantage of a school newspaper lies in the highly functional nature which writing assumes.

The child recognizes that certain standards are maintained by the newspapers with which he is familiar. He uses this knowledge in establishing standards for the class newspaper. He develops an appreciation of consistent good form in written material as he seeks to establish standards for the class newspaper. The knowledge on the part of the child that the material he writes will be read, the eagerness to see it in print, and the co-operative spirit engendered by group enterprise all contribute to the accumulating incentives.

Channeling of group interests is the first function of the school newspaper. Thus, the selection of topics becomes highly important inasmuch as the newspaper may be utilized as the motive in redirecting interests.

³¹ Fred E. Harris, sixth-grade supervisor, Indiana State Teachers College Laboratory School, Terre Haute, Indiana.

"Scoop," a VI B newspaper at Indiana State Teachers College Laboratory School, was organized so as to reflect the social and language interests and needs of its publishers and readers. The following were regular features:

- I. The feature or headline news (selected by group decision). Typical headlines appearing included: "Laboratory School Hangs up Stocking," "VI B's Prepare for Uncle Sam," "An Interview with Rubinoff," and "The Scoop Scoops Boystown." The latter headline was used when Rt. Rev. Msgr. E. J. Flanagan of Boystown, Nebraska, contributed an article on leisure time.
- II. School editorials (determined by problems of immediate concern to the group).
- III. The column, "Radio and Theater for You" (reviewed current theater attractions and radio productions of interest to children). The group which wrote this column interviewed the director of radio programs at Indiana State Teachers College for guidance in standards of choice.
- IV. Church news (listed the programs of churches which a survey showed to be represented in the group). The committee responsible for this column interviewed a number of ministers.
- V. Guest editorials (fourth page of "Scoop" used for editorial by an administrator or teacher). These were usually concerned with citizenship and were of value as instructional materials in the classroom.
- VI. Room news (written by class group representatives).
- VII. Creative writing (included the usual stories and poems written by individuals).
- VIII. Sports round-up (checked on the progress of local sports teams).
- IX. Special news (treated activities such as the building of a puppet stage).

The following was presented under the headline, "VI B's Prepare for Uncle Sam."

"A few days ago we were studying about thrift. Some of the things we said we could save were time, money, and natural resources. Another way to save money is to buy defense bonds and stamps. The people in our room who want a defense stamp-book are going to get one with a stamp in it. We are going to take the money that comes from our paper 'The Scoop' and from our paper drive. The idea to get stamps with the money was given to us by the editor of the paper. We will buy more stamps later on if the money in our treasury permits us to do so."

One of the editorials presented a problem common in many schools.

Playgrounds

"Let us look at our playground. There are bicycles lying down and some are out of the racks. Also, can't we do better and keep the papers off the ground? The only way is to work together. Dr. Jamison and the teachers would like to look at it and say, 'What a fine school yard! I know they work together!'" If you should find your yard at home with paper on it you would pick the paper up. Can't we do it at school? If we could, we would have a better place to work and play; a better place for people to look at."

Through these experiences in writing and publishing, children, as individuals

and as groups, learned the techniques to be used in successful management of the paper. Being responsible for all matters of good usage, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence forms within the bounds of their experience, they were often engaged in a "conference" with an English handbook. In this manner they gained experience in locating information and making applications of rules and examples. Letter and note writing were involved in securing contributed articles. Careful reading was practiced by proofreaders who checked all materials. Group reading was in order as soon as each newly mimeographed issue arrived in the room. The issue was at once evaluated in terms of accepted standards of interest and quality.

A school magazine may represent the selection of the best writing produced in units throughout the year or material especially written for a magazine. The former is usually the more effective plan with young writers. At least it was the method used successfully with the junior high school pupils at the University of Minnesota Laboratory School. Quoting the teachers' explanation of how the project grew will give a fairly adequate impression of the methods used in developing language power in children. Actual samples of the children's writing would, if space had permitted their use, have supported the claim that children can write with effectiveness and correctness when the educational situation is right.

PUBLISHING THE SCHOOL MAGAZINE

I. Purpose of the Magazine³²

The purpose of this magazine is to present the best in creative work of junior high school boys and girls in English and of Juniors and Seniors in art and in typing. To preserve the personalities these individual people have manifested through their creative work, teachers have left student work untouched as much as possible. In art, each sketch suggests the individual image, of specific chapter titles, that a student could command on paper. In writing, the individual's phrasing and the handling of ideas within sentences represents this person's ideas and turns of thought. In typing, each page is a student's planning to secure an interesting layout of reading materials. Every person whose work is represented has produced his assignment along with every other member of his class. His work, however, is the most original and successfully executed work on that lesson within his peer group.

From September through February the seventh- and eighth-grade classes of Miss Day and the seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade English classes of Miss Schmidt have been writing prose and verse within various units. From these stories, reviews, and sketches, the best individual work was chosen. Many a creative prose piece was written to answer ideas generated and elaborated within class discussions. "My Universe" sketches were among the many individual essays Freshmen wrote to disprove, they maintained, that "Joe Smith, American," lived in a very small mental world for an adult. Two stories in "Spine

³² Reported by Mildred Schmidt, teacher of English.

Chasers" are Freshmen solutions for a Coast Guard's mysterious death reported last July in the Minneapolis papers. The boys and girls took their writing materials to the hill overlooking the river and wrote stories solving the death. The ninth-grade English class had created all the writing in chapter i to answer an English unit problem, "Who Are We Americans?" The specific writing pattern, observed and heard just before the poetry was written, was the verse accompanying the sound film "The Plough That Broke the Plains."

These boys and girls chose the magazine title and the chapter and illustration headings. These were turned over to the art department together with carbon copies of the typed compositions. All this material had now been arranged by chapters and was ready for illustrating.

II. The Art Activity for the Magazine³³

The art class started by making a survey of a number of illustrated books to note how well artists adapted their illustrations to the contents of the book, and how precisely they kept their styles and techniques appropriate to the age levels of the readers. Surprising inconsistencies were uncovered, but it was noted that each artist did adapt his style to the medium with which he chose to work.

The class had no choice of medium. Since the expressive assets and limitations of a mimeograph stencil were to determine the style, the class decided to explore their values. They had a demonstration and a discussion on stencil cutting. Each student then collected a file of drawings that could be appropriately reproduced on a mimeograph. After a discussion of our files and the problems involved in mimeograph drawing, they decided that the illustrations for our book would have to be limited to simple line drawings with no tonal gradations except those obtainable through cross hatching and texture screens.

After these preliminary studies, each student drew his own interpretation of an appropriate chapter heading. These drafts were posted and a vote cast to determine our final selections. The winning illustrations were then submitted to the class for group criticism and redrawn with the specified modifications.

When the final drawings were finished, the stencils and blocks were cut by the class.

III. Typing the Magazine³⁴

Typing students had three purposes to fulfil when they received the compositions. First, they had to type rough-draft copies from the hand-written manuscripts. These Juniors and Seniors thus secured practice in typing manuscripts other than those written by themselves. Second, the manuscripts were typed in duplicate, one copy for the English department and one copy for the art department. This gave practice in making carbon copies. Third, from these typed copies, the students planned and typed the layouts for the pages as they now appear in the magazine.

Even when special attention is given to a specific skill in expression for several weeks or months, there may still be a few pupils who have failed

³³ Reported by Duard Laging, teacher of art.

³⁴ Reported by Lillian Biester, teacher of typewriting.

to master the skill. The following report illustrates a procedure which was successful for most of the pupils in the class and was therefore worth while in spite of the fact that it did not achieve perfect results.

THE PROBLEM OF INCOMPLETE SENTENCES³⁵

I. Objective

In developing this activity during the first semester of the sixth grade, the teacher had one chief language objective in mind. The majority of the members of this class still needed to learn to write their thoughts in complete sentences.

II. Motivation

In planning to answer the question, "How and why should we develop a spirit of neighborliness among the peoples of the Western Hemisphere?" the class decided to keep individual diaries of their activities. They hoped in this way to have, when their unit was completed, a complete record of their efforts toward a solution of the problem.

III. Language Activities

1. Time was given daily so that every member of the class could make an entry in his diary. Legibility and neatness were stressed, since the diaries were to be kept as records to which others might wish to refer.
2. After entries had been made for a week, the teacher asked if she might read the recordings. She checked them carefully, especially for clarity of thought. She found that most of the group understood the fundamentals of punctuating sentences, but that many sentences were either incomplete or so involved that they expressed no continuity of thought to the reader.
3. Before further entries were made, the teacher read examples of complete and incomplete sentences from the diaries, and the class discussed them. In every case the majority could see that the incomplete sentences did not tell enough. Ralph said, "They leave us hanging in mid-air."
4. The fact that a capital at the beginning and a period at the end of a group of words do not make a sentence was stressed. The group of words must express a complete thought.
5. As further entries were made the teacher found that many incomplete and involved sentences were still being written; so she provided practice periods when all those who needed it were given intensive work on the same language items. These drill periods never lasted more than thirty minutes at any one time and were distributed throughout the semester, so that they did not become uninteresting and tedious.
 - a) Groups of words with no continuity of thought were given, and the pupils rearranged the words so that they made sentences.
 - b) Sentences that were so involved as to be difficult to understand were also rewritten and discussed by the group. .

³⁵ Reported by Mercedes Erro, Goleta Union School, Santa Barbara County, California.

- c) Groups of words, some complete sentences and some incomplete, were listed, and the pupils were asked to differentiate between them.
- d) Incomplete sentences were rewritten by the pupils so as to express complete thoughts.
- e) Short selections from books were read, sentence by sentence, and the class learned to know complete sentences when they heard them.
6. Constantly the teacher referred the class to their own written work during these drill periods. Sentences, or groups of words, were often taken directly from the diaries, and the authors recognized them.
7. Criteria for writing complete sentences were set up, and at specific times the teacher would ask each pupil to check his current entry by the criteria. Each day while entries were being made, the teacher went over a number of them with the writers. In this way she was able to discover individual needs and problems and to aid in their solution.

IV. Outcomes

By the end of the semester the majority of the class had become very conscious of the need for expressing their thoughts in complete sentences. Most of them could recognize incomplete and complete sentences when they read them or heard them. They checked their written work to be sure that they had expressed themselves so that others would understand what they had tried to say, and in most cases their diary entries were composed of complete sentences.

A sincere motive for attempting to improve is an essential element in every effective learning situation. Even a formal, uniform assignment addressed to all the members of a class may be well motivated by a real social purpose. The next report is an illustration of such an assignment in connection with an activity in which every member of the class had a vital interest.

SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS³⁶

I. Objective

To build a more adequate vocabulary, so as to be able to paint better word pictures, especially by comparisons and contrasts.

II. Source of motivation

Desire on the part of pupils in Grades VI, VII, and VIII to paint more vivid pictures in writing special material for the choric reading to be given at graduation.

III. Teaching-learning activities

The following sheet of directions was given to the class:

You have found your vocabularies inadequate for the expressions you wish to use.

Some of you wish to paint pictures, by using words with opposite meanings so that you can bring out strong contrasts. Such words are called *antonyms*.

³⁶ Reported by Marguerite Ransberger, College School, Santa Ynez, California.

Others wish to use words with the same meaning, so that your work does not lose force by too constant repetition of the same words. The words you wish are called *synonyms*.

There are a number of good language texts on the library shelf. Select one or more, as you have time, and find out what they tell you about how to build your vocabulary.

Find synonyms and antonyms for the following words. We shall then choose the most vigorous word to go with each. These words were bothering you yesterday: glistening, walking, sleeping, crawling, and pleasant.

The following words were chosen:

<i>Word</i>	<i>Synonyms</i>	<i>Antonyms</i>
glistening	gleaming shining glittering	smouldering dulling
walking	treading plodding stepping	running racing lagging
sleeping	drowsing slumbering	waking
crawling	groveling creeping	flying floating soaring
pleasant	charming agreeable	disagreeable snarling

IV. Outcomes

Foundation was laid for building a richer vocabulary by creating greater awareness of the value of vivid words and more dissatisfaction with inadequate words. This lesson was followed by one on the use of the dictionary.

Other interesting accounts of successful teaching were sent in by many teachers and supervisors, but limitations of space make it impossible to present them here. Those presented were selected to illustrate a variety of teaching methods rather than because they are better than others which could not be included. The committee is grateful to all those teachers who responded to its request for illustrative reports.

II. SUMMARY

The discussion and evidence presented in this chapter, either in full or in footnotes to sources, lead to the conclusion that the methods used by the teacher are for one or more of these purposes: (1) to create an attitude toward language as a means of communicating ideas and feelings, (2) to develop an awareness of one's responsibility to use language to facilitate wholesome human relationships, (3) to develop skill in conversation, letterwriting, reporting, etc., (4) to train in methods of preparing a speech, writing a letter, writing an article, etc., (5) to teach the use of language books, dictionaries, etc., (6) to furnish training in special

language techniques [to conduct a meeting, to participate in a panel discussion, to participate in choral reading, to deliver a speech with or without a manuscript, to read a paper, to speak extemporaneously, to debate, to take part in a dramatization, to ask relevant questions, to make supplementary comments in a forum discussion, and to read aloud], (7) to correct special defects through individualized remedial teaching, or (8) to measure the results of learning.

Exemplified in the methods described are these principles: (1) life needs are used as centers of language activities; (2) all curricular and extracurricular situations in school life are utilized as motivation for developing skills or as opportunities to apply skills; (3) nothing taught has to be unlearned; (4) every skill, once it has been developed, is practiced to a higher degree of mastery and in more complex situations as the pupil progresses through the units; (5) each activity is introduced in the grade in which the social needs and learning capacity of the pupils make it possible and comfortable for them to develop the skills involved; (6) any language skill once launched is utilized and sharpened in later activities and in more mature situations; (7) the compositional activity [e.g., narrating] emphasized in any unit is repeated in that unit in many fresh and vital situations which stimulate and practice that kind of composing; (8) speaking and writing about real and vicarious experiences of vital interest to boys and girls precede any work on the mechanics of English; (9) out of the pupils' purposeful effort to communicate significant experiences, the teacher and the pupils discover the latter's individual needs for instrumental grammar; (10) diagnostically coded tests serve the pupils as self-checks on their progress toward mastery of grammar for correctness and for style; (11) a meaningful vocabulary of grammatical terms is developed inductively and then used in discussing techniques for revision and for proofreading.

Out of the methods described and illustrated in this chapter every pupil develops these significant life-habits: (1) he recognizes a purpose—his own—in speaking or in writing; (2) he selects ideas relevant to his purpose; (3) he organizes his ideas mentally or in writing before he attempts to develop them fully; (4) he expresses his ideas freely, without worry over techniques or mechanics; (5) if an expression is to be oral, he composes mentally or on paper an opening sentence and his closing “clincher”; (6) if an expression is written, he rereads it to correct errors and ineffective words and sentences; (7) if oral, he maintains a clear and pleasant tone of voice; (8) if oral, he uses various devices for holding or for recapturing the attention of the audience; and (9) because speaking and writing, though sometimes laborious, are always fun, he recognizes and responds to every situation in which the social amenities or his personal growth in language require his speaking or writing.

CHAPTER VIII

SPECIAL TOOLS THAT FACILITATE EXPRESSION

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The title of this chapter indicates the point of view of the yearbook committee toward such matters as spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation. Mastery of such tools is very important to a speaker or writer because it helps to free his mind of fears that his message may not be clearly understood or that errors in the expression of his message may cause his hearers or readers to doubt the competence of the author and therefore to attach little or no importance to what he is trying to say.

One who has mastered the tools of expression, and to that extent freed his mind of fears regarding the correctness of the language symbols he is employing, can give his full attention and thought to matters that are of primary importance: (1) deciding what effects it would be courteous and desirable for him to attempt to create in the social situation; (2) selecting the ideas that would probably be most effective in bringing about those results; (3) organizing the pattern and sequence of those ideas in the manner that would be most telling with the audience being addressed; and (4) phrasing each idea in language which is sufficiently simple, pleasant, clear, and precise to be fully understood and appreciated by the majority of the group addressed. A speaker or writer who has not mastered the special tools that are discussed in this chapter usually finds it necessary to give so much attention to them that he cannot think as clearly and fully as he should about the more important matters of the purpose, content, organization, and phrasing of his message.

I VOCABULARY

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I. TYPES OF VOCABULARY

Four types of vocabulary development require particular attention although they have much in common. They are:

a) *Writing vocabulary*, which includes the words one uses and those one should be able to use in writing. This vocabulary is important, particularly for spelling.

b) *Reading vocabulary*, which comprises the words one uses or should be able to use in reading. In great degree reading and writing vocabulary are identical, but there are enough differences not only to warrant a distinction, but to show that a reading vocabulary should not be used as a spelling list and to show that the words found in ordinary reading do not take care of all writing needs.

c) *Speaking vocabulary*, which is usually quite different from the reading vocabulary. It is typically much more informal. It includes many words which are not frequently written or found in reading material. It is particularly important that the oral or speaking vocabulary of young children be developed. Studies have shown that while adults use more different words in writing than in speaking, the opposite is true of children.¹

d) *Potential, or marginal vocabulary*, which has to do with words which one has not met, but which he could interpret because of their form or through context.

II. LIMITATIONS OF LISTS

The vocabularies of children are much greater than was formerly supposed. The faulty assumptions concerning the size of children's vocabularies are due largely to wrong impressions derived from various word lists which have been published. Those lists are very useful. Some tell us, with reasonable accuracy, which words are used most frequently in typical reading material, which words are used most frequently in social and business correspondence, and which words are considered most important for

¹ National Conference on Research in English, *Vocabulary Problems in the Elementary School*. Seventh Annual Research Bulletin. Prepared by J. C. Seegers (chairman), E. W. Dolch, and M. R. Trabue. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1939.

elementary-school reading. Others tell us a great deal about the technical vocabularies of subjects like history, geography, science, or music.

All types of vocabulary lists are useful, but it is important to note what they do not tell us. In the first place, let us remember that a word which is used frequently is not necessarily easy to understand, or vice versa. Frequency of use is no sure index of degree of difficulty, although it has often been assumed that it is. Difficulty depends in large part upon the idea a word stands for. Frequently the same word varies in difficulty according to the phrase in which it occurs. Frequency lists are, therefore, no sure indication of relative difficulty. To illustrate, "achieve" and "abide" are in the fourth thousand of Thorndike's² list, and "preside" and "boon" are in the fifth. That is, all four are frequently used. Yet not one of these is a word a child is likely to use frequently.

Lists do not tell us what words children *should use*. One of the clearest lessons research has to tell us about vocabulary development is that the words children use depend upon the stimuli which they meet.³ If experience prompts the use, children may use words that are not in any list, and frequently do. It is dangerous, therefore, to limit our ideas concerning the possibilities of children's growth by the word lists, which have no such purpose or intent.

Finally, most of the lists pay no attention to semantic or inflectional variations, yet different meanings of the same word represent tremendous differences in familiarity and in difficulty.⁴

III. LIMITATIONS OF TESTS

This is possibly an appropriate place to advise caution in the use of vocabulary tests. They have value, just as do the lists, but they do not afford a complete measure of the vocabulary of an individual child; and consequently they must be supplemented by observation and analysis of the child's usage. These supplementary methods are necessary in estimating both the area and the depth of a child's knowledge, that is, the different uses or senses in which words he knows can be used. A more complete discussion of the limitations of standard tests in this field is presented in chapter ix.

IV. DEVELOPING VOCABULARY

Much vocabulary development is the result of experiences met simply in the course of normal living. Much also is the result of reading, both

² Edward Lee Thorndike, *A Teachers' Word Book of Twenty Thousand Words*. New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1932.

³ National Conference on Research in English, *op. cit.*

⁴ Cf. chap. iii.

independent and assigned or suggested. But it is generally agreed that direct teaching, employing a variety of methods is desirable and best calculated to secure good results.⁵ Following are suggestions for such teaching:

a) Excursions are profitable, from the kindergarten on to higher grades. At every age level concrete experiences and visual aids should be utilized freely. Children learn words best, as a rule, when the word can be associated with some concrete illustration. Consequently schools should try to extend the experiences of children widely. But these experiences should be followed by oral or written accounts and descriptions, and teachers should see that significant contributions to vocabulary derived from those experiences are understood and are made vivid and clear. Without such follow-up, a child's recollection or understanding is likely to be confused, inaccurate, or incomplete.

b) In every subject field, teachers should develop vocabulary carefully and without undue haste. They should be sure that words met in the social studies, in arithmetic, in music, in any field, have real significance. It is hard to overemphasize the importance of this.

c) Teachers should try to encourage variety in the oral and written expression of children. Manifestly, the possibilities are conditioned by the maturity and capabilities of the children with whom one is dealing. This is true in any phase of teaching.

Children should be encouraged to use words which express thought exactly, rather than words which perform omnibus service. For instance, what expression would be a better choice than "thing" in these sentences?

A chair is a thing you sit on.

The catcher put a thing over his face for protection.

Everyone becomes impatient with the boring repetitions of set phrases. Children should be taught to select descriptive phrases with discrimination. Is a football game *grand*, *terrific*, or *exciting*? Is a moving picture *interesting* or *swell*?

d) Children should be taught to read with discrimination.

Read this line: "She walks in beauty, like the night." Do you like it? Why?

⁵ G. T. Buswell and Lenore John, *The Vocabulary of Arithmetic*. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 38. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1931; William S. Gray and Eleanor Holmes, *The Development of Meaning Vocabularies in Reading*. Publications of the Laboratory Schools of the University of Chicago, No. 6. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1938; Paul McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939 (revised).

See if children, in their reading, can find words or phrases which seem particularly well chosen or well turned.

Ask children to find appropriate descriptive words for events, persons, places, times, books, and the like. For instance, find words to describe:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A squadron of airplanes | 4. Franklin Roosevelt |
| 2. A garden in June | 5. A good book |
| 3. Seventy yards for a touchdown | |

Help children to discover the feeling which certain words incite. Especially call attention to the difference between vivid and colorless expressions.

e) Encourage children to try to discover the meanings of words through context. This is often just as effective as telling children the meaning and is more productive of thought. The blackboard can frequently be used to assist in such exercises.

f) Encourage children to keep vocabulary notebooks. In these notebooks, the following, for example, may be listed: new words heard in conversation or discussion; adjectives that are vivid and effective; new words met in general reading, or words which it is desirable that children remember for future use; effective words heard over the radio; words which can be substituted for overworked or "tired" words such as "swell," "grand," and the like; new uses of old words.

g) The teacher can use new words orally, sometimes in reading aloud, sometimes in providing illustrations or explanations. Oral reports or conversations of children can be utilized also. The teacher should herself seek opportunities to use new words which the children should know.

h) Simple exercises with prefixes and suffixes and with synonyms and antonyms can be combined with studying how to use a dictionary. At the same time attention should be paid to shades and slight differences of meaning, especially in synonyms. For instance, what is the difference between "old" and "aged"? Between "pretty" and "beautiful"?

As an example of analysis, consider the words "submarine," "automobile," and "valueless." Children find it very interesting to discover why those words are compounded as they are.

i) Utilize visual aids frequently, not only to illustrate words which have been used, but to suggest other words. Remember, however, that discussion must accompany seeing.

j) When it seems economical, do not hesitate to teach words directly. Frequently they can be taught best in phrases, sentences, or paragraphs, but at times they should be taught separately. Use the blackboard freely in such work. Seek opportunity to have the children use those words.

k) Ask children to list the words which a topic or another word sug-

gests.⁶ Christmas, spring, vacation time, fires, the ocean, or a recent vivid experience are possible topics for such listings. Words like "clouds," "pets," or "speed" can be used. Music frequently stimulates expression.

Similarly, ask children to list, or to discover in their reading, words which have emotional value. Ask them to find or to think of "happy words," "sad words," "beautiful words," "exciting words," and the like.

l) Help children to see the usefulness and desirability of a wide vocabulary. Perhaps a "Learn a New Word Each Day" campaign could be employed. Frequently this can be approached also by discovering children's particular interests. Encourage reading and experiences which develop or exploit this interest in vocabulary and pay attention to new words which are met and used in this pursuit.

m) Paraphrasing, rephrasing, and reconstructing are profitable, but should not be carried to excess. Frequently children can be led to an appreciation of an author's nice choice of words by comparing the original with the paraphrase. Frequently, also, paraphrasing can lead to understanding a word which was originally only partly grasped.

n) The teacher herself should be sensitive to word values and should be enthusiastic in encouraging children to develop their vocabularies.

II

SPELLING

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In any given school, the child's achievement in spelling is to a large extent dependent upon the nature of that school's curriculum. Among other things, an enriched curriculum provides the child with (1) varied experiences, (2) stimulation and definite instruction needed for taking part in the important language activities identified in chapter ii, and (3) stimulation and opportunity to do the various types of writing which he should do in order to clarify, organize, and make use of the important ideas presented in social studies, science, and all other school work.

⁶ Cf. Bernice E. Leary, "The Word Leaps Forth To Life," *Educational Method*, XXI (April, 1942), 333-37.

Through the varied experiences, the child can enlarge and clarify the vocabulary he uses in writing. Through the definite instruction in language and through the writing done in connection with other school work, he can develop concern for learning whatever words he needs in writing and for correcting whatever spelling errors he makes. A meager curriculum fails to provide even the few advantages mentioned above and depends solely upon the use of the spelling period in the daily program to provide needed and adequate stimulation for and instruction in spelling.

Lack of space makes impossible any full discussion of all the important problems that arise in the teaching of spelling. Consequently, this section is limited to a brief consideration of only the most essential matters pertaining to (1) the selection of the words to be taught, (2) the grade placement of those words, (3) methods of teaching, and (4) the measurement of pupil achievement.

I. WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE TAUGHT?

The words to be taught in spelling during the eight years of the elementary school are those which the child needs most in the writing that he does and should do in and out of school. It is both convenient and helpful to think of these words as being grouped into (1) the basic spelling list to be taught to all pupils through the medium of regular spelling lessons, and (2) the pupil's individual spelling list. The words included in the first group are those which should be listed in the textbook or the course of study. Those in the second group are words which constitute the pupil's highly individualized needs as exposed through his day-by-day writing and which he does not know how to spell.

1. The Basic Spelling List

At least fifty investigations have centered upon the problem of discovering the words of greatest importance in writing.¹ Some of these studies have analyzed the writing of adults. Others have analyzed the writing of children.

The results of practically all studies of adult writing were combined by Horn in building his list of the ten thousand words of greatest importance in the writing of adults.² In making this compilation, covering more than five million running words and thirty-six thousand different words, the

¹ The great majority of these investigations have been summarized in (a) Ernest Horn, *A Basic Writing Vocabulary*. University of Iowa Monographs in Education, First Series, No. 5. Iowa City, Iowa: College of Education, State University of Iowa, 1926; and (b) Paul McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, chap. ii. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934.

² Horn, *op. cit.*

relative importance of each word was measured in the light of seven criteria. These were: (1) the relative *frequency* with which the word is used, (2) the *commonness* of the word's use, (3) the *spread* of the word's use in different types of writing, (4) the degree of *cruciality* possessed by the word as evidenced by the severity of penalty attached to its misspelling, (5) the probable *permanency* of the the word's use, (6) the *quality* of the writing in which the word was used, and (7) the *persistent difficulty* of the word.

Horn's investigation and compilation show that the most important four or five thousand of the ten thousand different words constitute a common core of writing vocabulary needed by everyone regardless of sex, occupation, geographical location, and social, educational, or economic status. A comparison of this common core with the writing of adults generations ago shows that these words have been in general use for a long time. Furthermore, the consistent appearance of the words in various types of writing, coupled with the results of studies of other types of vocabularies, indicate that this common core is not likely to be altered soon by further investigations of the writing vocabulary of adults. Thus, the Horn list provides the most valid measure available of the ultimate and permanent spelling needs of children.

Investigations of the writing of children have analyzed spontaneous letters written outside the school³ and school writings⁴ such as themes, reports, announcements, records, minutes of meetings, and various types of creative writing. A compilation of all available studies of relatively recent origin covers more than 2,500,000 running words and about 12,000 different words found in the writing of children in every state from the first grade through the sixth grade.⁵ Careful study of the available investigations of children's writing shows that our knowledge of the words of greatest importance in children's writing is inadequate, that the writing vocabulary of children is much larger than has been commonly supposed, and that further investigation of that vocabulary is needed, particularly at the first- and second-grade levels.

³ The most extensive single investigation is J. A. Fitzgerald, "The Vocabulary Spelling Errors and Situations of Fourth-, Fifth-, and Sixth-Grade Children's Letters Written in Life Outside the School." Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, College of Education, State University of Iowa, 1932.

⁴ Typical studies are (a) E. W. Nowlin, "The Vocabulary of Sixth-Grade Children's Themes." Unpublished Master's thesis, State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado, 1931; (b) E. Lorenz, "The Writing Vocabulary of Third-Grade Children." Unpublished Master's thesis, College of Education, State University of Iowa, 1929.

⁵ Paul McKee, "The Writing Vocabulary of Children in and out of School." Unpublished study, State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado.

When the 5,000 words of greatest importance in the writing of adults are compared with the words which, to the best of our knowledge, are the 5,000 words used most commonly and frequently by children in writing, it is perfectly clear that a large amount of overlapping exists between the two lists. About 850 of the 5,000 words of greatest importance in adult writing are not found among the first 5,000 words of the children's list. The great majority of these 850 words are used frequently in business letters. Fewer than 600 of the first 5,000 words in the children's list are not found among the 5,000 most important words in the adult list. When there are sufficient data available to make an unquestionably valid comparison between the 5,000 words of greatest importance in the writing of adults and the 5,000 words of greatest importance in the writing of children, it is quite possible that there will be found to exist (1) a small number of words in the adult list not included in the children's list, (2) a somewhat smaller number of words in the children's list not included in the adult list, and (3) a much greater number of words—probably 3,500—common to the adult list and the children's list.

The 3,500 words common to the two lists represent both the present and *permanent* spelling needs of children. Ample in number, they unquestionably should constitute the basic spelling list to be taught during the eight years of the elementary school through the medium of regular spelling lessons, and they certainly should make up the word list to be included in the spelling textbook or the course of study.

2. The Pupil's Individual List

As every teacher knows, the pupil, in carrying out the important written language activities and in writing in connection with other school-work, often uses or needs to use words which he does not know how to spell. These words may or may not be included in the basic spelling list. Whenever such a situation arises for a given pupil, the word in question should be taught immediately in order that the pupil's writing can be completed. The pupil, of course, should keep a list of such words and should study them systematically until he has mastered their spelling. This list is the pupil's individual list and is supplementary to the basic spelling list.

II. GRADE PLACEMENT OF THE BASIC SPELLING LIST

The child's present need is the most fundamental criterion to be used in determining the distribution of the words in the basic spelling list among the various grades. The words to be allotted to a given grade are those, among the 3,500 words, which pupils in that grade have not learned and most need in writing.

The most useful and appropriate data needed for determining children's spelling needs grade by grade are those inherent in previously mentioned investigations of children's writing vocabulary.⁶ At the first- and second-grade levels, where sufficient data on children's writing vocabulary are not available, it is necessary to use data from certain secondary sources, such as children's speaking vocabulary⁷ and beginning reading vocabulary.⁸ It is understood, of course, that, since the range of spelling needs of children in any grade is sufficiently wide to overlap the needs of the children in adjacent grades, the allotment of words according to children's needs cannot be made merely by matching children's writing, speaking, or reading vocabulary with the basic spelling list.

In addition to the child's present need, other criteria should be used in determining the grade placement of the words in the basic spelling list. Among these are (1) learning difficulty and (2) logical sequence. Obviously, if the need for two words is the same at a given grade level, the word that is easier to learn should be taught first. In addition, words should be arranged in such a way that the teaching of important derived forms follows closely upon the teaching of base words. It is unfortunate, however, that the great bulk of available data on difficulty refer to spelling difficulty,⁹ and that so few data have been gathered relative to the learning difficulty of words.¹⁰

If spelling is to be taught at all in the first grade, the number of words need not exceed seventy-five. These words will be from the basic spelling list and will also be among the words in the children's spoken vocabulary. At each successive grade level the words to be taught in regular spelling lessons will be those words from the basic spelling list which are most needed and which can be learned by the pupils in that grade. At any grade level any word not included in the basic list should be taught

⁶ For example, Paul McKee, *ibid.*

⁷ For example, M. D. Horn, "Three Thousand and Three Words Most Frequently Used by Kindergarten Children," *Childhood Education*, III (November, 1926), 118-22.

⁸ For example, (a) A. I. Gates, *A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935; (b) E. L. Thorndike, *A Teacher's Word Book*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1921.

⁹ Spelling scales provide data on the spelling difficulty of many words. See also, for example; (a) Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*; (b) A. I. Gates, *A List of Spelling Difficulties in 3876 Words*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1937.

¹⁰ For example, see (a) F. A. Ogle, "A Study of Spelling Difficulty." Doctor's Field Study No. 1, State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado, 1933; (b) E. Dick, "Learning Difficulty in Spelling at the Fifth-Grade Level." Unpublished Master's thesis, State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado, 1936.

when the need for it becomes obvious. Although complete data needed for adequate grade placement in spelling are not available, it is now possible to make more accurate grade placement in spelling than can be made in any other curriculum field.

III. METHODS OF TEACHING

During the past thirty years numerous investigations have contributed information that has made possible the development of effective procedures in teaching the child to spell.¹¹ Among the most important of these procedures are the following:

1. The use of regular spelling lessons may be begun in the last half of the first grade or in the first half of the second grade. Since many of the pupils will have had little experience in writing or spelling, special care must be used in presenting each word in a lesson. This presentation should include at least (a) teaching the pronunciation of the word, (b) showing the pupil how to write the word and having him practice writing it, (c) having the pupil say the letters in the word, and (d) calling attention of the pupil to any difficulty he has with the word and helping him overcome that difficulty.
2. After the pupil has had sufficient experience in writing and spelling, care must still be used in making the first presentation of the words of a given lesson. This presentation should include at least (a) a pronunciation exercise in which the teacher teaches the correct pronunciation of each word, and the pupil becomes visually conscious of each syllable in that word and receives practice in pronouncing the word, syllable by syllable, (b) the pupil's learning of at least one meaning of any word which is unfamiliar to him, and (c) a pretesting on the lesson before the pupil engages in thorough study of any words in the lesson. This pretesting on each lesson is essential to the pupil's discovery of which words he needs to study, and the teacher's discovery of which pupils need her help and encouragement.
3. The teaching of any given lesson should provide for more than one testing and more than one study period on that lesson.
4. The pupil must be taught an effective method of studying a word. This method should include at least (a) pronouncing the word correctly, saying each syllable distinctly, (b) recalling the visual image of the word, (c) saying the letters, (d) checking the visual image with the word in the book, (e) writing the word, (f) checking the written word with the word in the book, and (g) rewriting the word.
5. Care must be used in dictating each test. Each word should be pronounced correctly and distinctly and should be used in a sentence that indicates its meaning.

¹¹ Notations or summaries of most of these investigations are available in (a) appropriate issues of *Review of Educational Research*. Washington: American Educational Research Association; (b) T. G. Foran, *The Psychology and Teaching of Spelling*. Washington: Catholic Education Press, 1934; (c) McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, *op. cit.*, chap. iv.

6. The pupil should understand the standards to be used in scoring tests. A word should be checked for further study if it is misspelled, if it has been written over or otherwise changed, or if it is not clear what letter is intended. The teacher may score test papers, each pupil may score his own, or pupils may exchange papers.
7. Spelling errors must be sharply distinguished from deficiencies in handwriting. As noted in chapter ii, poor formation of the letters *a, o, e, i, d, t, l, r, s, m, n, u, v*, and *w* is a source of great confusion. Pupils who form these letters poorly or who make illegible connections between letters should have suitable instruction in handwriting.
8. Emphasis should be placed upon developing and maintaining the child's interest in learning to spell. The motives to be used, however, should be wholesome. Helping the child to understand that the words he is studying are the most important words, using the pretest to focalize the assignment, making the pupil aware of the progress he makes as a result of study, and providing sensible ways of using words studied are wholesome means of providing motivation.
9. Only those rules should be taught which are useful in learning the words to be studied and in helping the pupil to overcome the particular difficulties he has with those words. In the light of the proper grade placement of spelling and the ability of pupils to generalize in spelling, the teaching of rules should be delayed until the upper grades. The most important rules apply to the omission of final *e*, changing *y* to *i*, and the doubling of the final consonant in making derived forms.
10. Individual needs must be cared for. The use of the pretest provides for highly individualized study. The pupil's individual word list makes possible his learning of words which constitute his individual spelling needs.
11. Provision must be made for the systematic review of words of persistent difficulty.
12. Pupils should be taught how to use the dictionary to find the spelling of a word.
13. Effort should be made to help the child to develop concern about the correctness of his spelling in all written work.
14. The meaning and use of prefixes and suffixes should be taught in so far as these syllables are employed in making words of great importance in writing.
15. Spelling should be sensibly correlated with other school work. Words which the pupil needs in writing in other school work and which he does not know how to spell should be included in his individual study list. Carrying out the language activities proposed in chapter ii gives the pupil admirable opportunities to use words learned in spelling.
16. The number of words to be taught in a given week or lesson should not be large and should vary according to the grade level. In the first or second grade the first lessons should contain only three or four words each. When pupils in that grade have had sufficient experience in writing and spelling, the number of words in a given lesson may be increased to ten or twelve. From fifteen to twenty words can be taught successfully in each lesson at the

third-grade level. In each of the intermediate grades, twenty words per week is satisfactory.

17. Provision must be made for remedial instruction, and such instruction should be undertaken before the pupil's failure to learn to spell has become habitual. When a pupil shows little if any achievement in spelling, the cause may be (a) poor attitude toward learning to spell, (b) lack of an effective method of study, (c) deficiencies in handwriting, and (d) physical disabilities such as poor vision or hearing. The pupil who has a poor attitude toward learning to spell needs wholesome motivation and purposes, including a clear awareness of whatever progress he does make as a result of study. The pupil who has poor study habits should be taught an effective method of learning to spell a word. A pupil's illegible handwriting should be analyzed, and instruction should be given to improve his poor formation and connecting of letters. Most physical disabilities should be treated by a physician.

IV. MEASURING PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT

Systematic and periodic testing of the child's progress in learning to spell important words is essential to his maintenance of interest in spelling and to the teacher's evaluation of his learning and of her instructional efforts. Such testing must center, however, upon words that have been taught, rather than upon just any words. Since standardized tests and tests made from standardized spelling scales almost necessarily include a large proportion of words not taught in any given grade in a given school, the use of such tests for the purposes mentioned above is questionable.

When a spelling lesson is taught in a manner which provides for more than one test on a given lesson, a pupil's progress in learning the words of that lesson is indicated by the difference between his scores on the two tests. In many schools, a pretest is given over each lesson before the pupil engages in a thorough study of words in that lesson. This study is followed by several study periods and testings. The difference between a child's scores on the pretest and the final test of a given lesson indicates the progress he has made in learning the words of that lesson.

In addition, it is good practice to measure the child's progress over a given term's work. If possible, before the teaching of the spelling lessons for a given term begins, a pretest over the words of those lessons should be given. After the lessons have been taught, a final test should be given over the words of the lessons. The difference between a pupil's score on the pretest and his score on the final test indicates the progress he has made during the term. If it is impracticable to use in the two tests all the words of the lessons, a random selection of fifty words from among those included in the lessons may be made in constructing each test.

III

HANDWRITING

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I. THE PLACE OF HANDWRITING IN A LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Language teachers are concerned about the teaching of handwriting principally because they realize the importance of giving the child an easy, fairly rapid tool for written expression. They recognize that some children are reluctant to put ideas on paper because they find writing difficult or because they fear that they cannot write legibly. Taking a longer view of children's needs, language teachers realize the irritation and misunderstandings that come from illegibly written letters, and the inefficiency and costliness of poor handwriting in the delivery of mail and in business generally.

The more vital and interesting the language program, the greater will be the children's desire to write. What the quality of writing will be depends on many factors. Physical comfort is important. The desk should be cleared to permit the child's arm to rest comfortably upon it. The light should be adequate, coming from the left for the right-handed child and from the right for the left-handed child. Movable seats permit such adjustments for individual children. Desk and seat should be of the proper height for each child. Pencils that are long enough to be held easily and sharp enough to mark clearly or pens that are in good condition help to make writing pleasant. Paper should be large enough for the purpose for which the writing is to be done to avoid the need to crowd words or lines.

Knowledge of how to make each letter legibly, how to write certain difficult combinations of letters (*wr, oi, mm*), how to keep slanting lines parallel or alignment regular, or how to keep the size of letters uniform cannot be assumed by the teacher. Often a very conscientious child fixes a poor writing habit firmly in his nervous system simply because he practices his error daily without recognizing the nature of his difficulty.

The language teacher should recognize that the child, like most adults, produces on different occasions various levels of handwriting. Material that is to be preserved in a scrapbook or class magazine or displayed on the bulletin board will usually be written with more care than a language assignment of less permanence. Letters that are to be mailed will be written more carefully than practice letters. Rough drafts, because of their impermanence, the expectation of making changes later when proof-

reading, and perhaps because of haste in writing, are frequently and quite reasonably less legible than the revised, final forms of the papers. The aim should be an acceptable final paper.

II. CONFLICTS AND TRENDS IN HANDWRITING PRACTICE

Whether there shall be a separate period for handwriting instruction, whether to excuse from practice those pupils who write legibly and as rapidly as necessary, whether to teach manuscript or cursive writing in the primary grades, whether or where to shift from manuscript to cursive writing instruction, how much time to give to handwriting instruction, whether to begin by practicing letter forms or by writing whole words, in what grade to begin instruction in handwriting, and whether to use a commercial system of handwriting are all problems on which there have been numerous research studies and many expressions of opinion.¹

Preference for manuscript writing in the primary grades seems to be increasing, with much justification in research. At the present time the shift from manuscript to cursive writing seems to be rather generally made in the last half of the second or the first half of the third grade. One objection to that practice directly concerns teachers who are interested in language. The shift is made at the time when the child is just beginning to want to write his own letter or story instead of participating in group composition. The transfer to a new form of writing often upsets the pupil's feeling of competence in getting those individual ideas on paper (a difficult process in those grades under even the most favorable conditions) and stultifies creative efforts. For that reason some school systems make the transfer to cursive writing in the fourth grade. This particular problem has not yet been made the subject of conclusive research.

About fifteen to twenty minutes a day are ample to devote to special practice in handwriting. In many schools a separate period is given to writing in only the first four or five grades. Above that, practice periods are continued for those pupils who need them, with attention being given to individual difficulties.

¹ Summaries of research and of articles on such questions may be found in the following:

Frank N. Freeman, "Selected References on Elementary-School Instruction: Handwriting," *Elementary School Journal*, XXXIV-XLI (October issues, 1933-40).

W. H. Gray, "Selected References on Elementary-School Instruction: Handwriting," *Elementary School Journal*, XLII-XLIV (October issues, 1941-43).

American Educational Research Association. *Review of Educational Research*, I (October, 1931), 288-89; IV (April, 1934), 138-40; VII (April, 1937), 138-39; X (April, 1940), 146-48.

Carlton W. Washburne and Mabel V. Morphett, "Manuscript Writing: Some Recent Investigations," *Elementary School Journal*, XXXVII (March, 1937), 517-29.

The first writing done generally involves whole words, a brief note to the mother or father from a first-grade pupil, a label for a picture, or a note for the class newspaper. In most schools some writing instruction is given in the first grade. While the use of a commercial system is not considered essential, there should be some source from which the child can acquire an accurate image of a legible letter form and with which he can compare his own writing.

A commendable trend toward analyzing samples of children's writing and adjusting instruction to the needs of individual pupils is apparent in recent articles.² Samples of each child's writing are used for discovering the slant, alignment, quality of line, clearness and consistency of letter form, speed of writing, the size of writing necessary for legibility, and other qualities. Suggestions are made for improving writing by attention to specific defects. Early contributions to this method of instruction were made by Paul V. West.³ While all children do not have difficulty with the same letters, much illegibility is caused by the poor formation of the letters *a*, *o*, *e*, *i*, *d*, *l*, *t*, *r*, *m*, *n*, *u*, and *v*. The teacher who is alert in checking those letters will eliminate many problems.

After studying samples of the handwriting of her pupils, the teacher may construct a class chart to reveal the most common difficulties. She should give first attention to those letters with which the largest number of pupils in the class need help, at the same time enlisting the interest of each child in working upon his own special illegibilities. She should show the class simple ways of checking slant and uniformity of letter size. West suggests drawing short lines through all down strokes of a word to determine whether or not slant is uniform. The height of letters may be checked by drawing horizontal lines along the tops of the letters. The rate of writing is important chiefly because quality often breaks down when children who have not learned to write with reasonable speed find themselves in a situation where rapid writing must be done. Children of the sixth grade are able to analyze samples of writing and, with the teacher's help, to work out the chart for their class.

² Beulah P. Beale, "Handwriting Instruction in a Large City School System," and Luella Cole, "Developing and Appraising a Diagnostic System of Instruction in Handwriting," *Language Arts in the Elementary School*, pp. 448-52, 460-48. Twentieth Yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals. Washington: National Education Association, 1941.

³ Paul V. West, *Changing Practice in Handwriting Instruction*, pp. 90-98. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1927; "Elements of Diagnosis and Judgment of Handwriting," *Remedial and Follow-up Work, Handwriting Bulletin*. No. 1, and "Correcting Faults Revealed by Diagnosis," *Remedial and Follow-up Work, Handwriting Bulletin*, No. 2. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Co., 1926.

III. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL HANDWRITING PRACTICES

Some difficulties and confusion are caused for the child by the contrast in conditions under which he writes at school and at home. Large pencils are used in many primary classrooms, but only small pencils are found in most homes. Large paper, often lined with wide spaces, is supplied at school, but the paper on which the child writes letters in his home is often very small, frequently folded, and sometimes so decorated that little space remains for the child's message. Letter forms made by the mother for the child to copy are seldom like those which he uses at school. Frequently the first-grade child is taught at home to print with capital letters only, while at school he learns to use both capital and small letters. The size of writing is often so varied as to make the letters appear totally different. Much attention is usually given at school to margins and other requirements of spacing and arrangement, while those problems receive little comment at home. The school pen is seldom like the fountain pen used at home.⁴

Sometimes parents are not in sympathy with the school's policy of teaching manuscript writing and insist upon teaching cursive writing at home, with the result that the child acquires confused pictures of letter forms. Often the parental attitude toward handwriting obstructs the teacher's efforts to stimulate a desire on the part of the child to write legibly. Where there is adequate research to justify the practices of the school in specific aspects of handwriting, some effort should be made to secure the co-operation of the home in eliminating unnecessary confusion for the child.⁵

IV

CORRECT USAGE, INCLUDING CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

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The various phases of correct usage can be most interestingly and effectively taught in connection with needs that arise during children's

⁴ For advice on the use of the fountain pen at school see Leonard B. Wheat, "The Fountain Pen Brings Change," *School Executive*, LVII (February, 1938), 278.

⁵ See chapter xi for suggestions on methods of securing such co-operation.

daily experiences that involve speaking and writing. As pupils converse, discuss, explain, describe, give reports, write letters, and tell and write stories, they will probably include in their expressions certain inadequacies and errors. To the extent that each pupil recognizes his own deficiencies and senses them as handicaps to effective and pleasing presentation of his ideas, he will feel a genuine desire to improve his language habits. Since pupils vary in the particular items with which they have difficulty, they will respond the more favorably as each child concentrates on the items on which he habitually makes errors.

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY CORRECT USAGE OF WORDS?

For years there has been a certain amount of disagreement as to the nature of the goal in teaching correct usage of words. On the one hand, some have maintained that good English is that which has been used by the grammarians and the writers of classics; on the other hand, many¹ believe that the English used by cultured people in everyday intercourse is the usage in which children should be schooled. This yearbook subscribes to the latter view and recognizes English as a growing, living, ever-changing instrument of communication. Presumably incorrect or even illiterate expressions may gradually grow into acceptability as they come into general use. To quote *An Experience Curriculum in English*:

Good English is that form of speech which is appropriate to the purpose of the speaker, true to the language as it is, and comfortable to speaker and listener. It is the product of custom, neither cramped by rule nor freed from all restraint; it is never fixed, but changes with the organic life of the language.²

Pupils are more likely to accept the standards of natural conversational English than those of prim precision. Instruction in correct usage of words should be concentrated on the relatively few really serious errors that individual pupils make.

II. THE AIM AND METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

The ultimate goal in teaching correct usage of words is the establishment of a strong personal preference for comfortably informal, effective language that is free from flagrant errors. The immediate aim is habit

¹ Good examples are: (1) S. A. Leonard, *Current English Usage*. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English (211 W. Sixty-eighth Street), 1932; (2) A. H. Marckwardt and F. G. Walcott, *Current English Usage*. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English (211 W. Sixty-eighth Street), 1939.

² *An Experience Curriculum in English*. National Council of Teachers of English Monograph, No. 4. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English (211 W. Sixty-eighth Street), 1935.

formation—the habitual use of correct and pleasing expressions, especially in speech. Mere knowledge of the correct form and of the rule governing it will do little to accomplish this immediate aim. It is satisfying practice that counts—practice consciously directed toward the replacement of incorrect by correct forms in the all-day-long speech of the pupil.

III. CORRECT USAGES RECOMMENDED FOR GENERAL TREATMENT

Many studies have identified the errors most frequently made by adults and children.³ It is likely that teachers will find in such lists most of the errors that are common in the language of their pupils. However, through observation and informal testing, the teacher must determine exactly which errors are prevalent among her own pupils. In general it may be said that more than half of the errors occur in the use of verbs, the four verbs *see*, *do*, *go*, and *come* being the most frequently misused. Pronouns incorrectly used account for 12 per cent of the errors; the confusion of adjectives and adverbs, 5 per cent. The redundant use of words makes up almost 12 per cent of the mistakes tabulated, and double negatives, 10 per cent. McKee's⁴ summary indicates that errors in the use of the following words constitute more than half of those tabulated: *was*, *were*; *saw*, *seen*; *ain't*, *hain't*; *is*, *are*; *did*, *done*; *doesn't*, *don't*; *this here*; *John*, *he* *did*; *didn't have no*; *them toys*; *that there*; *ain't got*; *have got*; *ain't got no*; *came*, *come*; *it was me*; *why*, *there was*; *didn't do nothing*; *lie*, *lay*; *from*, *off*; *went*, *gone*; *gave*, *give*; *those*, *them*; and *learn*, *teach*.

IV. GRADE PLACEMENT OF ITEMS

Any particular item of correct usage should be taught at the time and at the grade level at which need for it occurs, provided it is important enough to merit attention and sufficiently simple to be appropriate for learning at the child's current maturity level. For instance, it is recommended that the past tense of *do*, *see*, *come*, *go*, and *run* be taught as early as the second grade, but that the past and perfect tenses of *choose*, *break*, *speak*, *freeze*, and *steal* be treated at higher grade levels. Individual differences in children and the necessity for continuous attention to the more persistent errors over a period of years make a generally applicable grade placement impracticable. Some items are easier to learn than others

³ For a summary of such investigations see R. L. Lyman, *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language, and Composition*, chap. iii. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 36. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1929; Paul McKee, *Language in the Elementary School*, chap. v. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

and certain reports⁵ suggest a definite sequence for presenting items of word usage. Teachers and supervisors will probably find these reports helpful in determining which errors are considered important and sufficiently simple to be given attention at any given maturity level. The number of items to be presented in any given grade should not be large, and in practically every grade the items introduced in previous grades must be thoroughly reviewed.

V. PROCEDURES IN TEACHING CORRECT USAGE

Certain general principles should guide the teacher in planning instruction in correct usage. (1) Only those errors that are actually occurring in the pupil group should be treated. (2) The general course of study should include only the errors made by the largest number of pupils. Errors by individual pupils should be given individual attention. (3) The more noticeable and flagrant the error, the more important should the mastery of the correct form be considered. (4) The more frequently the construction is used, the more urgent is the need for forming the habit of using it correctly. (5) Habits are formed by repeating, practicing, and experiencing satisfaction in the use of the correct form until it seems more natural and agreeable to the ear and tongue than does the previously used incorrect form. (6) Learning is done economically only when the pupils know definitely what they are to learn and feel a keen desire to learn it.

The positive approach, making the use of correct forms desirable through participation in vitally interesting activities, involves much discussion, explanation, making of reports, story-telling, dramatization, and letter-writing. In planning such communications regarding matters that are of real interest, the pupil naturally seeks to use effective and acceptable forms of expression.

When he sees that errors are hindrances to the success of his undertaking, when he realizes that a certain standard of accuracy is demanded by his critical audience, he is in the best possible frame of mind for a vigorous and self-motivated attack on his own errors. The positive approach through worth-while activities which are interesting in themselves will do more to break down the customary attitude of passive resistance than any amount of specific drill, no matter how badly needed.⁶

⁵ L. J. O'Rourke, *Rebuilding the English-Usage Curriculum To Insure Greater Mastery of Essentials*; National Council of Teachers of English, *An Experience Curriculum in English*, pp. 247-49; Maude McBroom, *The Course of Study in Written Composition*, pp. 58-62.

⁶ *An Experience Curriculum in English*, op. cit., p. 243.

While never forgetting the prime importance of interesting activities, the teacher should constantly be alert to note each pupil's incorrect usage of words. At every opportunity she should "highlight" the more acceptable forms. With deliberate intent, the primary teacher should call attention to the correct forms of words that pupils misuse and should feature these forms in her own speech, in her oral reading of simply but well-written stories for children, and in the pupil's own oral reading and dramatization. Carefully selected radio programs and phonograph records may help to set the proper standards and contribute to a classroom atmosphere wherein correct usage becomes both pleasant and natural.

At the primary level the *imitation* of good models of speech is especially important. Little or no attempt should be made to explain the correct form. In fact, only the grossest of errors should be corrected directly, and then only in such a way as not to interrupt the pupil's thinking and speech. Upon occasion, the teacher may quietly and unobtrusively suggest the correct form as a child speaks, in order that he may more effectively present his ideas to his audience.

The following procedures are among those that have been found effective in establishing habits of correct usage in older children: (1) Place the correct form and the incorrect form in paired sentences; identify very clearly the correct and the incorrect forms; then practice the correct one. (2) Use a variety of practice exercises for each usage to be learned. The same usage may often be employed in several types of practice exercises, such as dictation, completion, multiple choice, error recognition, error correction, and crossing out the incorrect form. (3) Stress oral drill. (4) Individualize practice so that each pupil is working to remove his own language handicaps. (5) Let children keep their own records of personal language needs and test results. (6) Put on an all-school drive to eliminate particularly prevalent and flagrant errors. Co-operative planning by teachers and pupils should characterize the identification of items and the conduct of such a campaign.

In summary, the following activities may be recommended: (1) Observe and record the errors in the speech and writing of each pupil. Determine, if possible, which items are misused because of ignorance or established habits, rather than through mere carelessness. (2) Select for instruction at any given time only a few of the most important items. Explain why each usage is incorrect, to the extent that the maturity of the pupil will enable him to understand the explanation and use it. (3) Let pupils read correct forms aloud from sentences placed on the board. (4) Give varied and extensive practice in the use of the correct form. (5) Let the pupils prepare original sentences and paragraphs including the correct form. (6) Provide a planned maintenance program, with frequent opportunities for purposeful use.

VI. ITEMS OF CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION TO BE TAUGHT

It is important that instruction be limited to those uses of capital letters and punctuation that children actually need as they engage in purposeful writing activities. Some progress has been made toward determining the functional use by children of particular items of punctuation and capitalization.⁷ On the basis of such investigations, the following lists of items are recommended for teaching in the elementary school. It is to be understood that the lists should be abbreviated or extended whenever further investigations indicate the advisability of such modifications. The sequence of items in the lists is not indicative of relative difficulty or of probable grade placement.

Capitalization

1. Capitalization of first words of:
 - a) Sentence
 - b) Line of poetry
 - c) Direct quotation
 - d) Title
2. Capitalization of names and titles of particular:
 - a) Places: schools, streets, cities, states, nations, and important geographic localities
 - b) Days of week, months, special days
 - c) Persons, pets
 - d) Initials, abbreviations of proper names
 - e) Organizations with which children have contacts
 - f) Races, nationalities, school subjects named for nationalities
 - g) Company or firm
 - h) Brand or special product
3. Capitalization of the following miscellaneous items:
 - a) The pronoun "I"
 - b) Topics in an outline
 - c) The first and each important word in titles of books, pictures, magazine articles, etc.

Punctuation

1. Use of a period:
 - a) At the ends of declarative and imperative sentences
 - b) After initials and common abbreviations
 - c) After letters and figures prefixed to points in outline; after numerals in a list of words or points
2. Use of a question mark following a question
3. Use of a comma:
 - a) Between day of month and the year
 - b) Between name of city and state

⁷ For a summary of such studies, see McKee, *op. cit.*, chap. v.

- c) After salutation and complimentary close of a letter
- d) To replace "and" in a series of words, phrases, or clauses
- e) To separate a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence
- f) Following *yes* and *no*
- g) To set off the name of the person addressed
- 4. Use of an exclamation mark after expressions reflecting strong feeling
- 5. Use of quotation marks:
 - a) Around a direct quotation
 - b) Around titles of stories and poems; around titles of books and magazines, if underlining is not used
- 6. Use of the hyphen to separate parts of a word split at the end of a line
- 7. Use of the apostrophe:
 - a) In common contractions
 - b) In possessives
- 8. Use of the colon after the salutation in a business letter

VII. GRADE-PLACEMENT OF ITEMS OF CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

As in the case of the correct usage of words, no specific grade-placement for the items of capitalization and punctuation is suggested here. The reader may refer, however, to reports and investigations that suggest a sequence for teaching them when the children's functional writings first involve them and when the children's maturity level indicates adequate ease of mastery. Such sequences are given in *An Experience Curriculum in English*⁸ and in McKee's *Language in the Elementary School*.⁹

VIII. PROCEDURES IN TEACHING

Certain principles should guide the teacher as she directs her efforts toward the pupils' mastery of capitalization and punctuation. As has been suggested, a specific item should be taught when the need for it arises naturally. Thereafter, numerous opportunities for functional use should be provided. Even then, it will sometimes be necessary to isolate the item for definite practice or drill on the part of individual children who have not been able to master its correct use through experiences with it in functional writing. Practice on any item that is especially hard to learn should be spread over several grades.

Instruction should usually begin with "recognition of use," wherein the children's attention is called to the use of an item of capitalization or punctuation in the stories they read. For instance, the first-grade teacher may call attention to the capital letter with which each sentence in a story begins and to the period or question mark with which the sentence ends. This she should do as she writes it from the pupils' dictation. Later, when

⁸ *Op. cit.*, chap. xv.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 257-84.

pupils begin to write for themselves, the teacher should remind them to use such marks correctly in their own original stories. In cases where the pupils' papers indicate that any given item has not been mastered, specific practice may be given. The use by a pupil of capital letters and punctuation marks where they are not needed should be recognized as an indication of incomplete mastery and, therefore, of need for further instruction and practice, just as certainly as the absence of capital letters and punctuation where they are needed is so recognized.

V

PARAGRAPHING

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Paragraphing is an aid to clearness. It is as helpful to the reader in understanding a composition which presents more than one idea as punctuation is in making clear the different parts of a sentence. A reader has a right to find that each paragraph is concerned with a single topic. If a composition is well written, the reader will usually be able to secure a succinct summary by finding and reading the topic sentence in each paragraph.

Careful guidance should be given to help children to acquire a clear perception of the structure of a paragraph. Many children fail to acquire facility in organizing their ideas into sentences¹ and in grouping these sentences around central topics. Others neglect to see that each sentence tells something about the topic that has not already been told. These skills are basic to the construction of effective paragraphs.

I. ILLUSTRATIVE TEACHING PROCEDURES

The primary teacher may contribute greatly to the child's ultimate skill in selecting and arranging sentences that are related to a specific topic. The following conversation recorded by a kindergarten teacher during a "rhythms period" illustrates the beginnings of such organization.²

¹ For a helpful discussion of growth in "sentence sense" and sentence structure, see pp. 65 ff.

² All illustrations in this section, unless specifically credited to other sources, were selected from the work of children in the University Elementary School, University of California at Los Angeles.

- MILLARD: Let's do polliwogs.
I know how they do.
They shiver along.
- LARRY (*responding*): And we need tails,
Cause polliwogs have those
short black tails.
They have those round fat bodies.

As children begin to paint and to describe their paintings to the teacher and to their friends, many opportunities are afforded for expression of several ideas descriptive of the central theme of the picture. The following stories came from six- and seven-year-olds; all were expressed and later some were actually written by the children.

- DONALD: The round things are storage tanks.
Gasoline is stored in them.
- MITSI: The Halloween pumpkin is in the window.
It is shining.
- JAMES: The dust was everywhere. It was all around.
The bull was pawing the ground.
- JOAN: This is a cow I saw at the dairy.
There were many cows like her.
We watched the men milk them.
We watched the cows eat hay.
We saw many cows out in the pasture.

Dividing a composition into paragraphs should be taught when need for it has clearly arisen in the child's effort to put his ideas into written form. Obviously this will occur when the child needs to introduce a number of distinct topics as parts of a composition. Third-grade children, who had engaged in a study of the post office and how the mail is carried, showed in the following illustrations³ that their ideas had reached a sufficient degree of complexity to necessitate paragraphing.

Sending Messages Quickly

Many years ago the fastest way people had to send messages was to send them by runner. A runner could not run many miles a day. Only the rich people could afford to send runners.

Men had to think of a faster way to send messages. Someone realized that light and sound could travel faster than a runner or a rider on a fast horse. So men began to try to find ways to send messages by light and by sound.

³ Written by third-year pupils under the guidance of Marion McCombs, teacher, Williams Union Grammar School, Colusa County, California.

The Heliograph

A heliograph is a set of mirrors on a tripod. The sun's rays are reflected by the mirrors and make flashes of light. These flashes can be seen sixty miles away.

Heliograph means to send messages with the aid of the sun. Helio means sun. Graph means to write. So heliograph means sun-writing.

For many years men have used the heliograph to send messages. A certain number of flashes means a certain letter. By counting the flashes men can understand a message sent from many miles away.

The teacher may analyze carefully selected paragraphs from the children's writings to help them to see how in each paragraph every sentence contributes something new to the same topic. In a third-grade study of Hopi Indians, Suzanne's paragraph, written to interpret a certain picture, was used for this purpose.

White Deer is going down the steep mesa trail after clay. She needs the clay to make a bowl. The clay is reddish brown and is cool and soft. Soon she will have a tall olla for her water jar.

In a fourth grade Nancy's paragraph about the rubber gatherers of the Amazon Valley was used to help children to see that each sentence contributed a new idea to the topic.

A thick, oily smoke fills the jungle air. It is the smoke of the rubber-tapper's fire. He is smoking rubber. He pours the milky latex over a pole and turns it around and around. As the liquid gets hard, he adds more latex until the rubber biscuit gets big. Now it is ready to be shipped down the river.

Illustrative material similar to Robert's story of the gaucho was used in the fifth grade to create this same understanding of the characteristics of an effective paragraph.

The gaucho rides the pampas fearlessly, his brightly colored poncho waving in the wind, his silver spurs flashing. He is a brightly colored bullet shooting across the pampas. Suddenly he sees an ostrich. Up go his boleadoras; around and around they swing. They hit the legs of the ostrich. Quickly the gaucho dismounts and kills the ostrich for food.

Through hundreds of satisfying experiences in analyzing their own writings and the writings of children of their own group, children grow in power to construct clear and effective paragraphs. In some respects the analysis of the children's own writings is to be preferred to the use of material selected from the work of adult authors, because the content of the former is usually closer to the children's experiences and the mode of expression is likely to be more nearly comparable to their maturity level.

As children progress in their ability to construct paragraphs in which every sentence contributes something fresh and interesting to the topic,

they may be guided into a critical analysis of longer compositions. They may determine whether the first sentence of a paragraph introduces a new topic and whether each sentence contributes to the extension of that topic.

The problem of providing a smooth transition from one paragraph to the next necessitates considerable study of models and much systematic practice in writing. A sixth-grade teacher who was guiding the children through a study of the "westward movement" used a legend written by Sharon to direct the attention of the children to various ways of making the transition from paragraph to paragraph:

A Cherokee Legend

Long ago Sha-Ka-Kee lived with our other ancestors on the moon. The moon was not then a ball of ice and snow. It was covered with forests and valleys. The moon said that our ancestors could live there and go any place they wished except to a certain mountain.

A man named Na-Hee-Ha wanted to go to this mountain, but everyone warned him not to go. In spite of all their warnings he set out on his journey. When he came to the mountain he built a house.

The moon was very angry. He told the people to get off him. The people decided that the earth would be the best place to go. They tried to think how they could get there. Sha-Ka-Kee said, "Let us build a ladder." It took them ten years to build it, but at last they were finished.

Na-Ha-Hee wanted to go, too, but the people said he caused them too much trouble so they left without him. From that day to this, you can see him, for he is the Man-in-the-Moon.

II. METHODS OF IMPROVING PUPIL PERFORMANCE

The teacher may help children to grow in power in arranging sentences so that they will be effective in a paragraph by preparing exercises in which the sentences occur in unsatisfactory sequences. After these have been reorganized into a paragraph by the children, the original may be read to determine whether the children were able to achieve the same arrangement as the author. Later, the sentences from two or three adjoining paragraphs may be listed in illogical order to see if children can identify topic sentences and arrange them and their related sentences in proper sequence. The teacher will need to exercise care in the selection of materials to see that the models are worthy of the careful study which such an exercise entails.

Specific learnings in regard to the use of paragraphs should be taught as need arises. When children have occasion to record direct quotations, they may be taught that in reporting a conversation, the speech of each person is quoted in a separate paragraph. Most children will have already

noticed this from their reading, or their attention may be called to the arrangement used in the books they are reading.

As the length of the composition increases, children can be helped to see that paragraphing increases clarity and improves organization. Compositions which deal with more than one topic should not be written without paragraphing. A child's composition of more than 150 words will usually need some paragraphing.

In the teaching of paragraphing, as in the teaching of all other specific language skills, one composition corrected and discussed with the pupil individually is worth a score of neatly corrected papers handed back for the pupil's own study. In such direct teaching, attention should be focused on the particular items which require correction. And perhaps far more important, the pupil should be helped to realize the teacher's interest in his achievement in a field where a word of appreciation and encouragement is a tremendous stimulus to effort.

VI

GRAMMAR

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I. GRAMMAR AS A TOOL OF FACILE EXPRESSION

The learning that is possible under a teacher who has experienced grammar *as a tool of facile expression* rather than as a barrier to vivid communication is illustrated in the following account of what happened in a classroom.

Once a young football captain wrote a description of helping to lay a cornerstone in a sudden cloudburst of remarkable rain. His second paragraph began, "Everybody in that crowd of five thousand spectators had brought their umbrellas, and now opened them simultaneously like a field of mushrooms." Another boy in the class suggested that the sentence ought to read, "Everybody in that crowd of five thousand spectators had brought *his* umbrella and now opened *it* simultaneously like a field of mushrooms."

"But I couldn't say that," objected the football captain.

"Why not? It's correct, isn't it?" the critic appealed to the English teacher as umpire.

"But it would sound funny. Wouldn't it sound funny?" the captain also appealed to the umpire. "You ought to have seen that crowd when that storm cracked down. All those five thousand spectators snapped up their umbrellas at the same instant, like a military salute."

"That's a good sentence as you just said it," exclaimed the umpire. "With your five thousand spectators as your subject, you have a right to your plural pronoun and your plural umbrellas. It sounds more spontaneous too. Whenever you are in trouble with 'everybody' or 'anyone' you can always start fresh and think of something more vivid to say."

At this point a veritable Little Waldo of Boston raised a thoughtful eyebrow. "If 'everybody brought his umbrella' is correct," he asked, "why should anybody ever want to say anything else?"

And there was Madame Umpire, hung up between a football star who would die before he would say that everybody in a crowd had brought *his* umbrella, and a scholastic star who would die for his right to say it.¹

The teacher-umpire in the above classroom appreciated the football captain's power to perceive the significant in a situation and his resistance to a rigidly correct expression which did not communicate his experience. That teacher's personal control of grammar and her students' understanding of *plural* and of *agreement of pronoun with antecedent* made possible an intelligent and satisfying revision which eliminated a stilted expression in favor of something "equally correct but suitable for the occasion, exact, spontaneous, and comely."

Developing skill in using grammar as a tool of expression is a matter of gradual growth, most of which must come in the junior high school years. In an elementary-school class, especially in a section of the city where most of the children come from homes in which grammatically correct English is not spoken, the problem of revising a first draft is more difficult than it is with older children. Only a few concepts of grammar can be satisfactorily taught in the elementary grades, but these few should be used to help pupils to improve their language efforts.

The body of two letters written in a sixth-grade class will be quoted here. The *regular* teacher of the class had joined the military services. She had written one letter to her pupils. A *substitute* teacher had made the suggestion that each pupil write a letter to a friend. The two letters, reprinted here, have individuality. The writer of each had something to say. Some expressions in each letter convey the child's experience vividly enough that even a stranger reading them can visualize the experience and the child's reaction to it.

First Draft of a Child's Letter to Her Teacher

How are you getting along? Since you have gone to join the WACs we have had four substitutes. Everyday we peep around the corner to see who we are going to have next.

¹ Frances Lester Warner, "Uneasy English," *Essays on the Teaching of English*, pp. 194-95. (Robert Gay, ed.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1940.

When are you going to write again? I wish you would write to my house and also send your picture. My aunt loves to see your picture. When I heard that you had something in the paper about you, I looked for your picture, but I could not find it.

What would you do about the error in the concluding sentence of the first paragraph? The teacher, in a conference with the pupil who wrote the letter, tried in the following way to clarify the *whom* needed where the pupil had written *who*. *Teacher*: "You are going to have *me* next. What word in your sentence takes the place of *me*?" *Child*: "Who." *Teacher*: "You need an object for the verb *to have*. *Whom* is the object."

Such a difficult sentence should not be used, of course, in developing inductively the concept of *object*. But when such an error appears in a child's writing, it is instructive to *talk* the sentence over with the child, substituting words which will bring an already established concept into play in correcting the child's error.

In discussing the third sentence in the second paragraph, a different problem arose: an incorrect tense. *Teacher*: "Has your aunt ever seen Miss Nelva's picture?" *Child*: "No, but she would love to see it." *Teacher*: "That's how you should write the sentence to show Miss Nelva that your aunt *will* look at the picture when you get one."

The next sentence had another kind of difficulty in it: "*You had something in the paper about you.*" *Teacher*: "What did you hear about Miss Nelva?" *Child*: "That there was something in the paper about her." *Teacher*: "Then you should write, 'When I heard that there was something in the paper about you, I looked for your picture, but I could not find it.'"

Such discussion with the writer helps to make inductively taught grammar function as a tool of facile expression. Gradually, more and more responsibility can be placed upon the pupil to apply his knowledge of grammar in revising his writing. There will, however, continue to be occasions when only a conference with the teacher will clarify for the pupil how to correct his error without losing his idea.

First Draft of a Child's Letter to Her Child Friend

I don't think I told you about Friday when I was on a swing in the park. Well, I was sitting just as inasant in the swing as could be and all of a sudden I heard something making a cracking sound and the next thing I knew I was on the ground. I didn't hurt myself very bad, but it was bad enough.

The child's *inasant* is expressive of the way she was swinging and of her surprise at the accident. Saying to the child *in no cent* and writing the word for her will help to remove that spelling error. The grammatical error in the last sentence should be discussed. *Teacher*: "How did you

hurt yourself?" *Child*: "Very bad." *Teacher*: "When you wish to tell how you were hurt, you need the adverb *badly*. You say *it* was bad enough. What did you mean by *it*?" *Child*: "The hurt." *Teacher*: "Why not say 'but the hurt was bad enough'? A shorter way to express your idea is to say, 'I didn't hurt myself very badly, but badly enough.' "

Such a discussion with the individual pupil who has had effective instruction in grammar often brings about an insight that is lasting, clearing up permanently the specific error which the child has made. Such teacher-pupil discussions are essential when the child's experience leads him into more complex sentence patterns than his training in functional grammar has provided.

II. DEVELOPING GRAMMATICAL CONCEPTS

In the fourth or fifth year of the elementary school, it is usually possible for the teacher to develop inductively with children the concept of subject and predicate. Gradually, as the children develop larger powers of generalization, the noun or pronoun which is the simple subject can be identified, and then the verb which must agree with its subject in number and person.

From the child's earliest school experience of oral practice on correct forms *without* grammatical explanation, he matures to the higher learning level where instruction in grammar will give him (1) understanding of *why* the correct form is correct and (2) a tool by which to revise his first draft as he rereads it with alertness to subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, position of modifiers, sentence unity and variety.

Recognition of the inflections showing number of substantives, number and case of pronouns, and number and tense of verbs is likewise developed in the higher grades, so that, by the time they enter senior high school, boys and girls should be able to eliminate from their writing most of their errors in agreement and ineffective sentence structure.

As Cody² points out, "most of the rules of grammar we obey unconsciously, and if we are not in any trouble about them, there is little need for us to study them." Again Vizetelly³ claims, "although the child speaks, often correctly, without any knowledge of the whys and wherefores thereof, and is taught these later in life, unless its training is sound and makes a permanent impression, the child, contaminated by the illiteracies of the street and the vagaries of colloquial conversation, will quickly lapse into slovenly ways of expressing its thought."

² Sherwin Cody, *New Art of Writing and Speaking the English Language*, pp. xii-xiii. New York: Dial Press, 1938.

³ Frank H. Vizetelly, *How To Use English*, p. v. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1933.

Since there are always present some children who speak more effectively and more correctly than the others, the upper-grade teacher can build upon this strength as she develops any grammatical concept inductively with a class. Through "acting out the sentence" it is often possible to clarify the subject-verb-object relationship. When attempting to build understanding of the term *noun*, samples should include common, proper, collective, abstract, and concrete nouns, singular and plural forms, and masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. The attention of the children will not, of course, be directed to these classifications. But if, when the teacher is asking for the *name of* ———, she includes persons, places, and things, both abstract and concrete, the child will develop an all-inclusive concept. If only a very limited sampling is presented, the child will probably associate the term *noun* only with words like the samples.

Having established the broad concept of a *noun*, it is relatively simple to develop *what-stands-for-a-noun*, *pronoun*. Here again the samples should include all varieties of pronouns: personal, relative, demonstrative, interrogative, and indefinite. Thus will the child's initial contact with pronouns be inclusive enough to facilitate his recognition of all pronouns. Though the class of a noun or of a pronoun is a distinction of no value to the elementary-school child, the development of an all-inclusive concept of *noun* and of *pronoun* is essential. The teacher's or the textbook author's awareness of this variety will ensure an adequate sampling.

Similarly, the concept of *verb* needs to be developed from sentences having verbs in all tenses and persons and expressing action, being, and state. The meanings of the verbs in the sample sentences should be known to the children so that they may be aware of the *thought* as well as of the form of the verb.

It is important also in these developmental lessons that both interrogative and declarative sentences be used. The first work, however, should be confined to simple sentences.

Adjectives, as modifiers of nouns and pronouns, tell what kind of person, place, or thing is being talked about. It is useful to have children answer orally the question, "What kind of ———," the teacher supplying whatever noun in the sentence is modified by an adjective. Rapid practice with interesting sentences will help to fix the concept, *adjective*. After several days of intensive practice in recognizing the function of adjectives in a sentence, a similar plan of oral activity can be used to develop the concept *adverb* to answer *how*, *when*, *where*, *how much*, or *under what condition*. These questions applied to verbs, adjectives, and adverbs modified by adverbs will be guides to identifying adverbs in correctly written sen-

tences and later in spotting errors if the child uses an adjective where an adverb is necessary.

From a firm knowledge of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, it is not a difficult step to the discovery of *phrases* and *clauses* used like nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. The distinctions as to infinitive, participial, and prepositional phrases may well be postponed to the ninth grade and above. But seeing groups of words (i.e., phrases and clauses) used like single words is an important element in establishing the pupil's control of sentence structure. Agreement of subject and verb, correct position of modifiers, agreement of pronoun with its antecedent, and sentence unity and variety—all these are facilitated by a recognition of the use of phrases and dependent clauses in a sentence. Practice in rewriting poorly constructed sentences written by children about experiences known to all members of the class can develop a child's skill to a point when he can re-read his first draft and improve his sentence structure before submitting his paper to his teacher or mailing the personal letter he has written to a relative or a friend.

This step of applying the grammatical concept in improving his own writing is essential if grammar is to become a tool of effective expression. Any amount of drill on correcting errors in practice sentences and in revising the writing of other persons will not automatically facilitate the child's own speaking and writing. He must apply his knowledge of grammar to his own writing if effective habits are to be established.

III. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

In this brief discussion of grammar as a tool of expression, these points have been made: (1) Teaching grammar is a problem not only of *what* to teach, but also of *how* to teach. (2) Only that teacher who has experienced grammar as a tool of facile expression rather than as a barrier to communication is capable of teaching grammar so that it will function in the speaking and writing of her pupils. (3) Though simplicity is the aim in developing inductively any grammatical concept, the samples used should include the entire range of examples the child will meet. (4) In addition to developing grammatical concepts inductively, children need training in applying the grammar they have learned to their own speaking and writing activities. (5) The child's writing needs will often go beyond the point at which he has received grammatical training. In such cases, the teacher should supply the correction. Through discussion focused on what the child means or through questions, the teacher can frequently get the correct form from the child. (6) Written language offers greater opportunity for pupil self-directed revision than does oral English. (7) The alert habit of observing the spoken and the written word can be de-

veloped in children. (8) Oral discussion and drill must be utilized along with written practice if the child's ears and eyes are to be trained to appreciate correct and effective English and to revise incorrect and ineffective expressions which slip into their own speech and writing.

VII

SPEECH, VOICE, AND PRONUNCIATION

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How many times, in the last few months, have messages of local, national, and international concern come to you *via voice*? Reports of the Casablanca conference came from countless commentators over the air. News analysts interpret the war daily to listening millions. Conversation and discussion are supplanting voluminous written reports. *Speech*, today, as never before, challenges the attention of the world and comes as an educational challenge to every classroom teacher.

The fact that "Speech, Voice, and Pronunciation" appears as a separate section in this language-arts yearbook in no way implies that it can ever be separated in fact and usage from the many areas of language development which are dependent upon voice and words as the media for the transmission of ideas. Rather, let us say, these pages are devoted to a consideration of some of those special tools that facilitate expression, toward the desired end of making oral utterance in every area "a thing of beauty" and "a joy forever."

I. A FEW BASIC PRINCIPLES

Certain fundamental principles are essential to a working philosophy in speech education.

a) *One's speech is an oral expression of one's personality, demanding adequate techniques for satisfaction.* It is more important to have something to say than to say it well, but where can the line of demarcation be drawn? Very often, if one cannot speak reasonably well, the ideas that he may have are left unexpressed. And while we grant that emotional adjustment is more important than any specific skill, we as teachers are equally sure that the mastery of a specific social skill does much to promote emotional ease and confidence.

b) *The present world emphasis upon oral expression necessitates increasing educational emphasis upon speech as a tool of communication.* The lan-

guage arts afford increasing opportunity for speaking activities, both individualized and group. Informal reports and talks, book reviews, promotional talks for the Junior Red Cross, ticket sales, antivandalism activities, efforts at civic improvement—all of these *individualized* activities require speech; as do also the following *group* activities: conversation, discussion, introductions, conferences, interviews, choral speaking, dramatic play, radio broadcasts. Let's make it popular to speak well!

c) *The early establishing of good speech means economy of time and effort.* The old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is as true in the oral language areas as elsewhere. Toward this end, prevention before correction, good speech should be not only encouraged but taught, from preschool through adulthood, in the areas of (a) information, (b) skills, (c) attitudes, and (d) interests.

d) *An adequate program for the elementary school must provide for developmental, preventive, and remedial speech education.* The classroom teacher is the one to carry through the developmental and preventive programs. Because of the many hours which the child spends with her, she has the opportunity of knowing each child better than does the speech specialist, and of better understanding his needs. Hers is the privilege of teaching speech throughout the day—of developing and using it as a satisfying medium of expression for all subject matter. The remedial aspects of speech education may require a speech correctionist, unless the classroom teacher becomes skilled in the clinical aspects of speech.

II. SPEECH AND THE CURRICULUM

Speech is a common medium and important factor in the curriculum, having valuable contributions to make on all educational levels. Indeed, a well-rounded child or adult personality can be developed only if speech is correlated with daily activities and is made a vital part of them.

Interesting material for the classroom bulletin board provides an opportunity for the correlation of art, language, and speech. Slogans such as these might well carry attractive illustrations:

YOUR GARDEN IS GROWING. HOW ABOUT YOUR VOCABULARY?

EVERY TIME YOU TALK, YOUR WORDS ARE ON PARADE

GOOD SPEECH IS NOT RATIONED. USE IT FREELY!

ARE YOU USING FRESH COINS FROM THE MINT OF GOOD SPEECH?

Originality in the formulation of slogans as well as posters may be directed toward a speech emphasis in the language arts.

Obviously, speech and music have certain basic elements that are common to both: tonal quality, pitch, volume, phrasing, rhythm, melody,

articulation, and pronunciation. Why not try saying "Good morning" in many different ways, noting the melody of the speaking voice as you do so. Say it happily, wearily, gruffly, timidly. Do you hear the rising and falling notes? Can you trace your speech melody in a moving line that rises and drops with your voice? Pronunciation enters into music, too. It should be pleasantly accurate without being stilted or "arty."

Reading, the social studies, and spelling also find enrichment from a sane and balanced speech emphasis; but let us give special consideration to the language-arts area in more detail.

III. SPEECH AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

That there is a very close relationship between speech and language is illustrated by the comment which a patron made recently to a primary teacher: "Why not call the language work *speech*? It is that. Then all of us would know what is meant, because everyone speaks."

Recent language studies are giving increasing emphasis to speaking activities. Conversation units, along with self-criticism charts, guides, standards, and hints, enable each pupil under teacher guidance eventually to test and check his own progress—developing thus a speech consciousness which aids materially in the forming of desirable language habits.

Any classroom teacher might use this simple beginning:

1. Encourage every child to talk—to the teacher, to a small group, or to the entire class. This will give each child a chance to express his thoughts and develop the audience-contact so necessary in a world which stresses the personal equation.
2. Be sure he is heard. No matter how interesting an idea may be, if the speaker cannot be heard, the thought-content is lost.
3. Be sure he is understood. If a child cannot be heard, the problem is one of volume; if he cannot be understood, the problem is usually one of articulation.
4. Be sure his words express his intended meaning effectively. This standard or guide brings the matter of vocabulary to the foreground.
5. Be sure that as he talks, he includes all members of the group to which he is speaking. The establishment of audience-contact, "sense of communication," or directness is vital. It involves the personal relationship between speaker and listeners and makes for the gaining and holding of interest.

If the foregoing suggestions are effective, they will undoubtedly lead to a growing awareness of the importance of effective speech on the part of the entire class as well as to speech-consciousness in the individual.

In all oral language activities, certain general objectives are desirable. They have been mentioned by many writers, but here they are again for further emphasis:

1. A happy attitude toward sharing knowledge and experiences, resulting in the effective adjustment of the child to any social situation: introductions, telephoning, interviewing, extending and accepting invitations, sharing information—all *life* situations which call for effective oral expression
2. Co-ordinated thought and expression (having something to say and saying it well)
3. Functional speech techniques, growing out of individual needs and directed toward meeting those needs, to the ends of freedom, ease, and naturalness of expression
 - a) Audibility
 - b) Distinctness
 - c) Accuracy in pronunciation
4. Personal satisfaction, and criteria for self-evaluation

A brief listing of some of the *individualized speech activities* which fall within the language area will suggest the manifold possibilities and need for effective oral expression:

1. Making an informal talk (sharing experiences—reporting)
 - a) Telling about individual experiences: good times, games, travels, local excursions, observations
 - b) Reporting on books and magazine articles, current events
 - c) Reporting on motion pictures
 - d) Reporting on radio broadcasts; giving a broadcast
 - e) Giving student council reports
 - f) Telling about community projects (the social studies approach may be used here): defense, safety, health, housing
 - g) Sharing hobbies: science, art, music, stamp-collecting, etc.
2. Telling a story or anecdote
 - a) Retelling a story read independently, or heard out of class
 - b) Retelling an anecdote with an obvious point, with attention to the climax
 - c) Retelling a conversation, introducing impersonation
 - d) Telling an original story
 - e) Telling stories about songs, composers, and operas (music correlation)
 - f) Telling stories about pictures, artists, and sculptors (art correlation)
3. Interpreting a poem or prose selection to the group, through oral reading from the printed page

The realm of literature offers unlimited opportunity for individual taste in poetry, prose, drama—in adventure, imagination, heroism, fun, and laughter.

The objectives and criteria for these oral activities in the language-arts area must go hand in hand—the end desired and the evidences of progress toward that end:

1. Was the material interesting? Was it well organized, authentic, and appropriate to the occasion?

2. Was the delivery easy, natural, and effective?
 - a) Was the personal appearance pleasing?
 - b) Was the voice adequate, as to volume, pitch, quality, and melody?
 - c) Was the language used effective in choice, use, and pronunciation?
 - d) Was audience-contact established and held?
3. Was courteous and intelligent listening evident?

Socialized speech activities within the language area also afford maximum possibilities for the development of adequate tools for oral expression. In these group activities each individual plays an important and responsible part.

1. Conversation
 - a) Talking with a familiar small group
 - b) Talking with mere acquaintances or classmates not intimately known
 - c) Talking graciously with strangers in an impersonal manner on such topics as these: sports, school affairs, local events, community projects, national affairs, radio programs, motion pictures, interesting places
 - d) Conversing easily and naturally during dinner, luncheon, or a refreshment period
 - e) Talking with one other person (rather than with the group)
 - f) Making introductions—children to adults, children to children, parents to teacher, school administrator to room

In the various types of activities in which conversation plays an important role, the objective should be the development on the part of the pupil of an attitude of ease and naturalness toward the social situation. Certain readily observable criteria might well be applied by the teacher in directing such activities. Is the pupil's bearing in these situations free from artificiality and is self-consciousness reduced to a minimum? Does he talk in terms of the other person's interests and does he listen politely to the other person's opinions? Is his speech pleasant, distinct, and audible? Does he accept personal responsibility for helping to keep a social situation moving?

2. Telephoning
 - a) Making an inquiry by telephone
 - b) Placing an order
 - c) Giving information requested
 - d) Chatting with a friend

In this activity many of the same criteria and objectives would be valid as in other oral activities, but specifically we might consider these: Was the message clearly formulated? Was the identity established? Was the information accurate? Was the manner gracious and courteous? Was the vocabulary adequate? Was the articulation distinct? Was the voice well modulated? Was the rate adapted to easy understanding? Was the telephone experience carried through to a convincing end as quickly as possible?

3. Discussion and planning
 - a) Informal conversation
 - b) Round table

- c) Panels
- d) Forums

Space will not permit any detailed presentation or discussion of these various types, but from the speech point of view, the objectives and criteria developed under *conversation* may be applied here with equal appropriateness.

4. Choral speaking

This newly revived ancient art is proving more and more popular with the classroom teacher who is seeking a creative medium for the appreciation and enjoyment of literature through oral group participation. It may well be used as a means of (a) giving children pleasure in group reading and choric dramatization, (b) stimulating individual leadership and followership through diversified arrangements of poems, (c) presenting speech techniques in an appealing and esthetic way, (d) increasing and enriching vocabulary, and (e) stimulating creative interpretation and writing.

Choral speaking is an art, and a very enriching one, but it requires skill in directing. Its greatest value is in the classroom, *not for exhibitionary purposes*; but the classroom teacher will need to prepare herself with more than a poem and a desire if she is to accomplish satisfying results. Techniques must be studied.

IV. PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciation cuts across all subject-matter areas and is a matter of interest (and sometimes concern) from the time the baby first begins to pronounce words. It has been given consideration in several chapters of this yearbook as a need to be met, but because many classroom teachers have requested information concerning the most frequent errors in pronunciation, they are here grouped under seven general headings with a listing of sample words frequently mispronounced.

1. Incorrect vowel quality: Frequently heard in such words as *get, was, pretty, catch, because, creek, just*
2. Incorrect consonant quality: Frequently heard in *length, what, luxury, immediately, walking, talking*
3. Misplaced accent: *positively, research, museum, umbrella, discharge*
4. Omission of requisite sounds: As in *recognize* (reco'nize), *family, really, mirror, nearer, February*
5. Sounding of silent letters: In such words as *often, toward, evening, parliament, salmon, corps*
6. The addition of superfluous sounds: As in *athlete, mischievous, once, prairie, film, portentous, elm*
7. The utterance of sounds in their improper order: Frequently heard in *children* (not childern), *hundred, larynx*

Carlyle has said, "The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none." Therefore let us analyze our personal and classroom needs and then move intelligently toward correction!

VIII

USE OF THE DICTIONARY

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Even the most eloquent speakers and prolific authors use the dictionary frequently. Anyone who is to learn to write or to speak effectively needs to acquire early in the process a full appreciation of the resources available in this special tool for the facilitation of expression. It should not be overlooked, of course, that the dictionary is also useful in reading and in listening, and that learning to use the dictionary effectively as an aid to expression may be very helpful to the individual when he has need to use it in the interpretation of the expressions of others. But dictionary training for the interpretation of reading materials will not necessarily enable the individual to use the dictionary effectively in facilitating his own expression. This use of it for expression purposes must be taught as definitely and specifically as spelling or handwriting.

I. AN OVERVIEW OF DICTIONARY INSTRUCTION

To advise a student to "get the dictionary habit" is not sufficient. What he must acquire involves scores of specific items of information, positive attitudes, and specific skills in the use of the dictionary. Furthermore, one must learn to judge whether a particular fact he has found in the dictionary is so important that it should be learned at once in order that he will not have to look it up again in a short time. "The dictionary habit," if it means constant dependence on the dictionary for the spelling, pronunciation, or meaning of common words, may become the cause of an enormous amount of wasted time and energy. Instruction in the use of the dictionary should always include this training of the individual's judgment as to whether a fact obtained from the dictionary is to be used for the moment only or to be memorized for frequent later use. It should also include habits of keeping a dictionary near at hand and of looking up the correct spelling, meaning, or pronunciation immediately, rather than trying to remember to look it up at some more convenient time.

It should be understood, of course, that regardless of the amount of instruction and experience provided for them, the members of a given class will probably differ tremendously in their abilities to use the dictionary effectively. By the time they have reached the sixth grade, for example, one or two members of the class may have better understanding and skills

in the use of the dictionary than the average college graduate, while a few other members of the class may still be having real difficulty in finding a desired word. Such differences make it desirable, after the first few instructional periods at least, to give a considerable part of the instruction in dictionary usage individually or in small groups that are relatively homogeneous so far as need and readiness for that particular instruction are concerned. While a number of definite suggestions have been included here regarding the grade level at which certain facts and skills should probably be taught, these suggestions are based upon experience rather than upon research. Complete mastery of a skill by all pupils is not to be expected in any grade. In this area, as in all other areas of the language arts, individual need for and readiness to learn the item determine in large measure whether the teacher's instructional efforts will be fruitful or fruitless.

Another fact that must be recognized by the teacher is that the dictionary is a *reference book*, and that it usually provides much more information about a given word than the individual needs to learn on any given occasion. At one time a student may wish to determine whether the word he wants to write should be spelled *expres* or *express*. It would be very inefficient, and it would probably distract his mind from the formulation of his message if he stopped at that time to read everything the dictionary can tell him about this word: its many different meanings, where it may be divided at the end of a line, the different purposes it may serve in a sentence, and its pronunciation. A pupil may very properly learn to refer to the dictionary to determine the spelling of a word before he has learned to understand fully all the diacritical marks used to indicate its exact pronunciation or all the italicized letters used to show the parts of speech it may assume. If the student inquires of the teacher what a given mark or abbreviation means, she should tell him in language that he can understand, but she should not usually expect him to read or to remember more facts about a given word than he sought to find out when he turned to the dictionary for help.

While instruction in the use of the dictionary must be given by easily comprehended sequential steps that are carefully adapted to the individual student's needs and capacities, the program of instruction should not be allowed to lapse when the pupil shows little further curiosity about words. The teacher's task at such a time is to examine again the pupil's strong interests to discover something the pupil wants or may be led to want to do well, and which can be done better by improving his language through the use of resources available in the dictionary. In other words, the pupil should ultimately be led through satisfying experiences in using the dictionary not only to be able to use all of its resources, but also to

enjoy using them as means of doing better the things that are vitally important to him.

The initial steps in the program of instruction for dictionary readiness and use may involve the use of simplified materials, such as an alphabetically arranged list of pupil's names or a simple glossary; but, as soon as it can be done without confusing the child's understanding, the teacher should point out in a real dictionary the features which the child has already learned to use in the simplified materials and should give him satisfying practice in using these features of a real dictionary. The chief outcome of instruction to be sought is intelligent use of a real dictionary to improve the language he uses in accomplishing things that are important to him, whether these activities are in or out of school.

II. LEARNING TO FIND THE WORD

Before one can use the dictionary effectively in facilitating his own expression or in interpreting the language of others, he must learn to find the word in which he is interested. The knowledge and skills involved in locating a desired word in the dictionary are very important in using other kinds of reference materials. Pupils should early be made conscious of the fact that in learning to find a word in the dictionary they are developing the abilities needed also in finding names in telephone books, city directories, and biographical reference books, and in finding discussions of desired topics in an encyclopedia or in the index of a book or a library. An opportunity to examine and discuss some of these reference materials will, of course, be much more impressive than merely being told about them.

a. Alphabetical Order. A thorough mastery of alphabetical order is rarely acquired in the modern first grade. Many first-grade teachers make it possible for their pupils to acquire some knowledge of and experience with alphabetical order, however, by making a chart of new words as they are learned in various reading activities and arranging these words in alphabetical order. In some classes a picture illustrating each word is drawn or cut out of a magazine and pasted beside it on the chart to help the children to recall the word, and not infrequently the title, "Our Dictionary," is printed in large letters at the top of the chart. A few children may even gain satisfaction and profit from keeping their own lists. This initiation to alphabetical order and dictionary use is very sound psychologically and quite effective practically. While a few pupils may learn through such experiences to name the letters of the alphabet in their usual order, it is probably unwise for the teacher to seek such an outcome for the average first-grade pupil.

In the second grade definite attempts may usually be made to have

pupils recognize the different letters of the alphabet, both capital and lower-case, and learn to say and write them in alphabetical order. The teacher should take occasion frequently in this grade to call attention to the alphabetical order in lists of names and of other words, but she should not insist on the average member of the class learning to arrange words in this order.

In the third grade pupils should be taught to arrange short lists of names (five or six) and of other words in alphabetical order, at least so far as the initial letters of the words are concerned, and to locate quickly in longer alphabetical lists (ten to twenty) any specific name or word that may be mentioned. These exercises should be extended before the end of the fourth grade to alphabetizing by the first two, and then by the first three letters, and to the finding of words in the index or glossary of a book and in at least a small dictionary. Alphabetizing by all the letters should be taught not later than the fifth grade. Before they reach the sixth grade practically all pupils should be able to locate any specified word in any type of alphabetical list. If a pupil appears in a later grade without this ability, however, his specific difficulty should be discovered and corrected, and then he should be taught step by step the remaining skills needed in finding words in an alphabetical list.

b. Guide Words. Many people who use their dictionaries frequently make little use of the guide words printed at the top of each dictionary page. The use of these guide words should be carefully taught as soon as the pupil begins to use a real dictionary. Failure to use them wastes time. Initial explanations should be followed by well-motivated exercises and carefully phrased questions at intervals until the habit of using the guide words in locating the desired page has been well established.

c. Finding the Spelling of a Word. As soon as they have become fairly well acquainted with the alphabetical arrangement of words in the dictionary, children should be taught how to locate the correct spellings of words whose meanings and pronunciations they already know. Such leading questions as the following will help children to locate a particular word in which they may be interested:

What would probably be the first letter of the word? What other letter might possibly be first?

What is the vowel sound in the first syllable? What letter or letters would probably be used to represent that sound?

Does the printed definition in the dictionary show that this is the word sought, or will it be necessary to look for still another word?

Children should be taught that, when they have found in the dictionary a word concerning whose spelling they have been in doubt, it is important to master its spelling (see pp. 158-60) before closing the dictionary, unless

the word happens to be an unusual one which is not likely to be needed again. A great amount of valuable time can be wasted in looking up exactly the same facts about the same word time after time.

III. LEARNING TO PRONOUNCE THE WORD

The teacher's own pronunciation is the source from which pupils should learn to pronounce most words correctly, but the dictionary is another source that should be systematically taught soon after a child has learned to find words in such reference books. Unless the teacher persists in having her pupils learn to find for themselves the pronunciation of a new word, many children tend to develop the lazy habit of asking the teacher for help and thus fail to develop the ability to help themselves through using the dictionary.

The instructional sequence in this field as in others consists first in pointing out occasionally the features that are available in the dictionary for aiding in the pronunciation of words; and then, when the pupil is ready to learn the use of a particular aid, giving him a clear explanation of it, followed by satisfying drill and exercise in its use. While each of the dictionary aids to good pronunciation should probably be initially presented and practiced on different days, they should all be reviewed and exercised together at later periods.

a. Syllabication. Simple illustrations of two- or even of three-syllable words may be discussed in the third grade, using particularly words that have been formed from shorter words by adding simple suffixes (e.g., playing, teacher, dresses), but a full explanation of syllables will not usually be appropriate in this grade. In the fourth grade, or soon after the child has mastered the finding of words in the dictionary, his careful attention should be drawn to the divisions between syllables in the bold-faced entry words and in the parenthetical respellings of words in the dictionary. Fairly complete explanations of the use of syllables in pronunciation should be followed by frequent practice in pronouncing words in terms of the divisions printed in the dictionary.

The fact that, when a word at the end of a line must be divided, the hyphen indicating the division should come between syllables may be pointed out in earlier grades, but it is not usually considered necessary to require pupils to develop the habit of so dividing written words before the end of the fifth grade or the beginning of the sixth.

b. Diacritical Marks. The use of the term "diacritical marks" need not usually be employed, even in oral discussions, before the fifth grade. The recognition of the macron (—) and the breve (˘) as indicators of the long and short sounds, respectively, of vowels should be taught as soon as the child has need for this information, which will in any case be not later

than a few days after he begins to use a dictionary to check the spelling or meaning of words. The recognition and use of these two marks in pronunciation should become as automatic as the recognition and use of the vowel letters themselves. The names of the marks need not be memorized immediately, but their significance for pronunciation should be recognized by practically every pupil above the fifth grade.

Another mark which should be carefully taught as soon as the child begins to use a dictionary is the accent ('). Before the end of the fifth grade practically every pupil should be able to use both the primary and the secondary accent marks appearing on the entry words and on their respellings (in parentheses, showing pronunciation) in the dictionary.

At some point in the fifth grade, or with certain groups even in the fourth grade, the teacher should give careful explanation of the key words and marks given at the bottom of each dictionary page. These explanations should be supplemented immediately by group and individual exercises in the use of the key in pronouncing relatively unfamiliar words from the dictionary. While the largest amount of exercise may possibly be given to the use of the breve (ĕ), the macron (ē), the modified macron (ē̇), the circumflex (ê), the tilde (ẽ), the two dots above (ä), and the italicized vowel with a breve (ă), a certain amount of successful experience should be enjoyed by each child in using each mark provided in the key of his dictionary. Unfamiliar words that are met in reading social studies and science materials offer excellent opportunities for effective practice in the use of diacritical marks as guides to pronunciation.

In the course of these exercises in using the dictionary's key to pronunciation, and whenever the opportunity arises later, the teacher should make it clear that, when two respellings of a word are given in parentheses, the first pronunciation is considered preferable.

IV. LEARNING TO USE THE WORD

A student's use of the dictionary to discover the meanings of words read or heard will naturally precede his use of it to check the meanings of words he wishes to speak or write. If an individual has in his mind an incorrect or incomplete understanding of what a word commonly means, he may easily use the word in speaking or writing without knowing that he is giving it a meaning it does not commonly have. In order to reduce the frequency of such errors, children should be taught to make sure that the words they use, particularly in written communications, actually have the exact meanings they are attempting to convey to their readers or listeners. Sensitivity with regard to one's own certainty regarding the meaning or usage of a word should be carefully cultivated, and when there

is any doubt one should feel a definite responsibility for looking for the doubtful meaning or usage in the dictionary.

Another use of the dictionary that must be taught specifically is the discovery of synonyms and antonyms with which to enrich and vary one's expressions. Attention to this resource in the dictionary may be given at the time children are being taught to use the dictionary to discover the meanings of new words heard or read. Actual practice in finding more appropriate, more colorful, and less monotonous expressions for use in speaking and writing should probably begin in the fifth or sixth grade. The effectiveness of such practice will depend, of course, upon the degree to which the practice actually adds to the success of the activities to which the speaking and writing are related.

CHAPTER IX

EVALUATION IN THE LANGUAGE-ARTS PROGRAM

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This chapter has three purposes: (1) to state a point of view regarding the place of evaluation in the language-arts program, (2) to discuss the various purposes of evaluation, and (3) to describe the values peculiar to certain evaluation techniques.

I. POINT OF VIEW WITH RESPECT TO EVALUATION

According to the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*,¹ "evaluation is a relatively new technical term, introduced to designate a more comprehensive concept of measurement than is implied in conventional tests and examinations." It seems unfortunate that two such distinct and valuable concepts as measurement and evaluation should be confused in this manner. In this chapter, the term *evaluation* will have a meaning quite different from that of *measurement*. The term *evaluation* as used here implies that certain values have been accepted (in the language arts these values are clearly defined types of language behavior), and that the language behavior of an individual or group is judged or appraised in terms of these values. Many techniques for making such appraisals are at hand and will be described. Measurement is only one of them. Measurement, on the other hand, may be defined as the process by which the quantitative aspects of properties or qualities are made amenable to mathematical logic. In the simplest type of measurement only an order is established and the limitations of ordinal numbers are imposed. However, with such properties as *time*, *distance*, and *weight*, cardinal relationships may be established, and the property may be subjected to the whole of mathematical logic. Measurement, even when restricted to the field of educa-

¹ Walter S. Monroe (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, p. 468. New York: Macmillan Co., 1941.

tion, has many uses other than evaluation, e.g., prediction, control, classification, exact comparison, determination of status, and research.

Perhaps the distinction between the two concepts can be clarified by an example in which physical measurements are used for purposes of evaluation. One uses a yardstick or an avoirdupois scale to *measure*, not to *evaluate*, a person's height or weight, although one may use the obtained measures of height and weight for a group of students as basic data in the evaluation of a physical education program to which they have been subjected. Properties are measured without reference to their inherent value. The assumption that a measured characteristic has value is a function of evaluation rather than of measurement. The confusion arises as a result of the tendency to ascribe value to every characteristic measured by an educational test.

The use of the preposition *in* instead of *of* in the title of this chapter implies that *evaluation procedures are an inherent part of the language program* and that no attempt to separate them in order to justify the use of poor or inadequate instruments for evaluation can change that fact. Certainly the most important factor in the learning situation is the goal of the learner. What the goal is and the intensity with which the learner strives toward it determines what is learned. He accepts and rejects responses in terms of it. If the goal is adequately conceived and understood, learning is usually direct and effective. If the goals are fuzzy or false, or beyond the understanding of the learner, fumbling and inefficient learning are likely to characterize the results.

Perhaps no single element in the instructional program is more responsible for determining the goals for which teachers and pupils strive than the instruments that are used in evaluation. The very meaning of the term evaluation implies this. Of course some test-makers² have repeated-

² In explaining the relation of test content to curriculum content in the manual of the 1938 Iowa Every-Pupil Tests of Basic Skills, E. F. Lindquist states (pp. 32-33), "In the past many teachers have shown an unfortunate tendency to look upon the content of tests as a source of drill material in instruction, and have attempted, by means of intensive drill on specific items, to get all of their pupils to do all of the things which are measured by the test. *Such practice is inevitably futile, but even worse, it may do serious harm to the pupils involved.* . . . These tests are directly concerned only with certain basic skills and abilities, and are not intended to measure total achievement in any given subject or grade. While most of these skills and abilities appear basic or essential to nearly all types of academic achievement, it is obvious that they are not inclusive of all the desired outcomes of instruction at the levels tested. The results obtained from these tests, therefore, will not constitute in themselves an adequate basis for, and should not be unduly emphasized in, the total evaluation of instruction."

ly warned against overemphasis on the qualities measured by their tests. They have recognized the inadequacy of their instruments and have warned teachers against accepting the objectives measured by the tests as adequate curriculum goals, but it is doubtful that such warnings are effective.³

Since the objectives given consideration in an evaluation program tend to become the goals of teachers and pupils in the instructional program,⁴ it is essential that the two programs merge and that the first criterion of adequate evaluation be in terms of the goals which it sets. Are the goals sufficiently comprehensive? Are they given the proper relative emphasis? Are they functional rather than formal? Are they clarified and made ob-

³ In the Sixteenth Yearbook of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, W. A. Brownell quotes from a letter from an anonymous publisher of tests (p. 244), "I could give you the names of several school systems in which cumulative files are kept of all forms of our tests. We have standing orders from these systems to supply them with each new form as it appears. Our agents tell us that in these systems the tests are available to all teachers who, if not encouraged to do so, are certainly not prevented from duplicating these tests and drilling their pupils in taking them. Then some form or other of these tests is used at the end of the year to measure achievement and to make comparisons between classes within the same system."

⁴ The extent to which evaluation instruments influence pupils in what they study, how they study, and what they remember has received attention in the following research reports.

Paul W. Terry, "How Students Review for Objective and Essay Tests," *Elementary School Journal*, XXXIII (April, 1933), 592-603.

Harl R. Douglass and Margaret Tallmadge, "How University Students Prepare for New Types of Examinations," *School and Society*, XXXIX (March 10, 1934), 318-20.

Paul W. Terry, "How Students Study for Three Types of Objective Tests," *Journal of Educational Research*, XXVII (January, 1934), 333-43.

George Meyer, "An Experimental Study of the Old and New Types of Examination," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXV (December, 1934), 641-61; XXVI (January, 1935), 30-40.

Walter S. Monroe, "Some Trends in Educational Measurement," *Twenty-fourth Annual Conference on Educational Measurements*. Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University, Vol. XIII, No. 4. Bloomington, Indiana: Bureau of Co-operative Research, 1937.

On page 32 of this reference Monroe epitomizes the research findings effectively, "There has been much discussion of the importance of teachers formulating their objectives and, in response to the pressure of authority, they have spent many hours in formulating lists of immediate objectives, that is, the goals toward which students are expected to direct their efforts. Many of these lists merit commendation, but their influence upon students is practically nil in comparison with the influence of the tests administered. Students direct their efforts toward becoming able to respond to the tests they anticipate."

jective by the instruments? Is faulty learning and behavior clearly revealed? Are next steps in the learning process indicated? These are some of the factors which should be given first consideration in an evaluation program. The requirements of measurement should be emphatically of secondary importance. One should not confuse the criteria of evaluation with the criteria of measurement.

The language-arts program in many schools consists almost exclusively of isolated drill exercises in vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammatical usage, and word usage. Perhaps the test-makers in the field are not entirely responsible for this condition, but certainly they have done little to improve it. The standardized tests available in the language-arts field are almost exclusively limited to measures of these elements of correct forms.

The attempt since the beginning of the measurement movement in education to think of evaluation in terms of measurement and to divorce it from the instructional program has had a number of undesirable results. It has focused attention upon limited goals which can be objectively checked without regard for their relative importance. There has been a tendency to measure objectives such as vocabulary knowledge, spelling ability, capitalization, and punctuation skills in isolation, and this has been followed by a tendency to teach them in isolation. It has made difficult, if not impossible, the effective utilization of evaluation results in teaching. Since the evaluation program was not keyed into the instructional program, the only alternative was to reverse the procedure and to fit instruction to evaluation. Evaluation results have frequently been expressed in terms of test scores which are difficult to translate into desirable learning situations. It has focused attention upon test norms, which are too frequently confused with grade standards, and faulty classification and promotion practices have been the result. The needs of individual pupils have been neglected because the test scores frequently reveal general deficiencies rather than specific needs. Whole areas of language-arts objectives have been completely neglected in most evaluation programs.

II. CRITERIA OF AN ADEQUATE EVALUATION PROGRAM

An evaluation program which is to be effective in promoting more desirable learning in a given field should meet certain criteria:

- a) The goals or directions in which development is to take place must be agreed upon.
- b) The dangers inherent in such a listing of goals from the standpoint of instructional organization and how and when they are to be achieved must be understood.

- c) The evaluation instruments used must lead the learner constantly to a clearer and more objective understanding of the goals and to an increased acceptance of them as his own.
- d) The evaluation instruments should tend to reveal to the learner clearly and in detail the inadequacies in his performance.
- e) The evaluation instruments should furnish the teacher with basic information necessary for planning future learning procedures. They should reveal in so far as possible the thought processes of the learner.
- f) The evaluation instruments should encourage the formulation of constantly improving statements of goals by the learner as insight develops.
- g) Behavior should be evaluated in situations that are sufficiently broad to require an integration of the elements involved comparable to that in functional situations.
- h) The program should be based on the fact that the most effective evaluation, from the standpoint of learning, is that which is carried on by the learner; of next importance is evaluation by the teacher and fellow learners, since their assistance may be given the learner directly; and last in importance is evaluation by an agent outside the classroom, since the chances of influencing the learner are here more remote.
- i) Evaluation instruments should be available to the teacher and learner whenever the learning situation requires them and not according to the calendar.
- j) Measuring instruments should not be used in evaluation unless they meet the criteria of sound evaluation procedure.

1. Goals in the Language-Arts Program

The over-all purpose of this yearbook is to give a comprehensive view of the language arts and to set goals which are functionally related to the language requirements of contemporary life. This requires that the attention of both teachers and pupils be focused somewhere beyond the mere mechanics of oral and written expression as ends in themselves. An adequate statement of these goals is an extremely difficult task because language is in one sense the very core as well as the primary instrument of the intellect. Setting goals for language development is almost exactly the same task as setting goals for intellectual development. The important consideration in setting such goals is that all lower order objectives be recognized as subsidiary to the main over-all goal, which is the development of the most effective instrument of thought and expression possible. This goal should be the focus of the pupils' attention in the language-arts program from the beginning.

A modern program in the teaching of reading illustrates this point. The child reads for meaning from the very first day of the program. When he learns the alphabet, phonics, word analysis, and the other subgoals of

the program, these are always functionally related to the over-all purpose of getting meaning and are clearly recognized as such by the pupil.

The language goals toward which the pupil is striving at any given time should not only be within the understanding of the child, but they should also be initiated and stated by him. In many cases these goals may originate in a discussion directed toward finding ways of achieving the over-all goal more effectively. To illustrate what is meant, the following goals were set by a sixth-grade class⁵ to guide their informal discussion of current events and to serve as a basis for the evaluation of such discussions.

Standards for Judging a Discussion of Current Events

1. The conversation should be kept going.
 - a) Keep on main points.
 - b) Change the subjects smoothly.
2. The people should be polite.
 - a) Boys should stand when girls enter.
 - b) If a boy and a girl start to talk at the same time the boy should let the girl go ahead.
 - c) If two girls or two boys start to talk at one time, the girl or boy who has talked more gives place to the one who has talked less.
 - d) Only one person should talk at a time.
 - e) Usually questions should be addressed to the group instead of to individuals.
 - f) The people in the audience should not attract the attention of the people in the conversation group.
3. The host or hostess should be polite to the guests.
 - a) The host or hostess should talk only when the conversation drags.
 - b) The host or hostess should talk only to encourage the guests to talk.
 - c) The host or hostess should greet the guests cordially.
4. Only people who have studied the *Weekly Reader* and read the local papers and listened to radio reports should accept an invitation.
 - a) People should think as they read.
 - b) People should be able to locate on the map places mentioned.
 - c) People should look up difficult words.
 - d) People should be able to give the source of their information.
5. People should talk about topics that are important now and that will probably be important for some time to come.
 - a) Talk about the causes of the war and how the war affects the people.
 - b) In connection with disasters talk about means of preventing them.

⁵ This class was taught by Emily V. Baker at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College. Quoted by Walter W. Cook, *Grouping and Promotion in the Elementary Schools*. Series on Individualization of Instruction, College of Education, University of Minnesota, No. 2. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1941.

6. People should discuss sensible, interesting, and pleasant topics.
7. People should use good English.
 - a) People should make themselves heard.
 - b) People should pronounce words correctly.
 - c) People should use correct expressions, e.g., *the reporter* instead of *it*, *an interesting conversation* or *a pleasant conversation* or *a lively conversation* instead of *a nice time*.
 - d) People should omit unnecessary words.
 - e) People should try to add to their vocabularies all the time.

It will be necessary for teachers at each grade level to help pupils set up similar lists of goals for such activities as: using the telephone, conducting meetings, making oral reports, writing reports, filling out blank forms, and the other language activities listed in chapter ii. Teachers need more help in this procedure than is ordinarily available to them. Consider, for example, the problem of helping pupils to set up appropriate goals in the writing of friendly letters. The teacher might begin the process by reading a letter which is definitely informal, at times humorous, newsy, cordial, and revealing of the personality of the author. Another letter might then be read which is definitely perfunctory, stilted, matter of fact, and lifeless. The pupils, after discussing the two letters, may be guided in setting up desirable standards for such a letter. We may assume that the mechanical aspects of all letters used as examples might be very nearly perfect, in order that the pupils will not become involved at this time in mechanics and form. The important consideration from the standpoint of evaluation is that the true goals of the language-arts program shall enter clearly not only into the consciousness of the teacher, but also into that of each learner.

2. Dangers Inherent in Listing Goals

Whenever there is a listing of goals there is a tendency to assume that these goals should be achieved in a one, two, three fashion, that certain goals should be allocated to certain grade levels, that the various goals are independent of each other, and that goals are achieved once and for all time. The fact is, none of these assumptions is true. When one measures the achievement status of children at different grade levels in the elementary and high school, one finds almost the complete range of ability at every grade level above the primary. For example, at Grade VII the average range in capitalization ability is more than seven years, the punctuation age range is more than eight years, and the English-usage age range is almost eight years.⁶ If one may infer the status in the achieve-

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

ment of other goals from these, one may conclude that a teacher at any grade level is likely to be concerned to some extent with all goals. The chief difference in different grades will be one of emphasis. Furthermore, one does not achieve success in language arts by taking a list of different goals in succession. This would be like attempting to gain an education by reading a dictionary or an encyclopedia. Instruction should not be organized around goals, but in a way that will help pupils to achieve goals in a functional setting. The functional setting should be the basis for the organization of instruction. The primary purpose of goals is for use in evaluation rather than as centers for the organization of instruction.

3. Evaluation Instruments Must Set True Goals

When one uses a test for purposes of prediction, classification, determination of status, or research, the nature of the test is not important as long as it has been found to serve effectively the purpose for which it is used. But when the test or other instrument is used in evaluation the nature of the items and the mental set of the pupil in taking the test become of primary importance. For example, one may wish to determine the status of pupils with reference to their ability to read literary materials—to grasp and interpret meanings—to sense mood and emotion. In doing this one may use a literary acquaintance test which emphasizes titles, authors, plots, characters, and literary types, assuming that those who have read most widely will have the highest literary reading ability. The assumption may be more or less sound, and the test may serve its purpose fairly well as a “flash” test. But if a teacher should use such tests systematically to evaluate instruction in literature, both teaching and learning would soon be modified and directed toward the learning of plots, characters, and authors, to the neglect of the more primary aims of the course.

4. Evaluation Instruments Must Clarify and Objectify Goals

When pupils participate in constructing a list of standards, a rating scale, or any other device for evaluating their language-arts activities, it is obvious that the whole process serves to make more specific and concrete the types of behavior toward which they are to strive. This has been found to be a highly valuable evaluation procedure by many teachers, especially in the oral language area.

In the earlier days of the measurement movement in education, when the criteria of measurement held ascendancy over the criteria of evaluation, several scales were developed for rating the oral presentation of per-

sonal experiences^{7, 8, 9} and for rating the "theme" type of written composition.^{10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17}

It is probable that the principal reason for the decline in the use of such scales is that they consumed much time and failed to justify this time by objectifying to the learner and the teacher the specific goals to be achieved in oral and written expression.

In several areas of achievement, notably the natural sciences, social sciences, reading, and study skills, paper and pencil tests have been devised which clearly establish desirable mental sets on the part of the learner and objectify the operation of the higher mental processes in such a way as to make clearer the true goals of instruction.

5. Evaluation Instruments Must Facilitate Instructional Planning

When an evaluation instrument facilitates instructional planning it functions as a *diagnostic* or *readiness* instrument. The important considerations are: Does it reveal specific strengths and weaknesses of individ-

⁷ J. F. Hosc, "The Chicago Standards in Oral Composition," *Elementary English Review*, II (May, 1925), 171-77; (September, 1925), 255-61.

⁸ C. Beverley, "Standards in Oral Composition: Grade One," *Elementary English Review*, I (December, 1925), 360-61.

⁹ S. Harring, "A Scale for Judging Oral Composition," *Elementary English Review*, V (March, 1928), 71-73, 76.

¹⁰ F. S. Breed and F. W. Frostic, "A Scale for Measuring the General Merit of English Composition in the Sixth Grade," *Elementary School Journal*, XVII (January, 1917), 307-25.

¹¹ M. B. Hillegas, *The Hillegas Scale for Measurement of English Composition by Young People*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

¹² E. Hudelson, *Hudelson's English Composition Scale* (Grades IV-XII). New York: World Book Co.

E. Hudelson, *Hudelson's Typical Composition Scale* (Grades II-XII). New York: World Book Co.

E. Hudelson, *Hudelson's Maximal Composition Scale* (Grades II-XII). New York: World Book Co.

¹³ E. E. Lewis, *Lewis's Scale for Measuring Special Types of English Composition* (Grades IV-XII). New York: World Book Co.

¹⁴ E. L. Thorndike, *The Thorndike Extension of the Hillegas Scale* (All grades). New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

¹⁵ M. R. Trabue, *Nassau County Supplement to the Hillegas Scale* (Grades IV-XII). New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

¹⁶ M. J. Van Wagenen, *Van Wagenen English Composition Scale* (Grades IV-XII). New York: World Book Co.

¹⁷ W. H. Willing, *Willing Scale for Measuring Written Composition* (Grades IV-IX). Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Co.

ual pupils? Does it provide the teacher with evidence regarding the thought processes of each pupil? May desirable instructional procedures be inferred from the results?

The assumption is frequently made that objective test items cannot meet this criterion since there is no way of knowing why a pupil marks an item the way he does. He may have an incorrect reason for a correct answer or a very plausible and essentially sound reason for an incorrect answer. Such an assumption is unwarranted. Test items have been constructed in many fields which not only require a judgment to be made but also an indication of the reason or reasons why it is made.

6. Evaluation Instruments Should Be Available to Teacher When Needed

If evaluation is to be an integral part of the instructional program, the teacher should have available at all times the necessary instruments to be used as the progress of the class requires them. The rating scales, which have been built with the help of the pupils for the purpose of evaluating conversation, oral and written reports, introductions, and the like, can be printed on large sheets of oak-tag paper and hung on the bulletin board as needed. Informal tests of the dictation and proofreading type may be designed by the teacher and used at regular intervals to determine individual needs and progress.¹⁸ If standardized tests can be found which conform to the instructional program of the school, these should also be made available to the teacher.

III. INSTRUMENTS OF EVALUATION

If one disregards the instruments designed to measure achievement in vocabulary, word usage, grammatical usage, spelling, and the mechanics of written composition, it can be said that in the language-arts area the evaluator is left almost completely to his own devices. It seems desirable then that a part of this chapter be devoted to the various techniques of evaluation which may be employed. These should be classified and the peculiar strength and weakness of each considered. As commonly listed, such instruments include various types of tests, product and behavior rating scales, questionnaires, interview schedules, controlled and free observation records, anecdotal records, stenographic reports, sound recordings, and both still and moving pictures.

There are three fundamental ways of studying the nature of behavior

¹⁸ Maude McBroom, *The Course of Study in Written Composition for the Elementary Grades*. University of Iowa Monographs in Education, First Series, No. 10. Iowa City, Iowa: State University of Iowa, 1928.

for evaluation purposes: (1) *observing directly* either behavior, reproduced behavior, or a product of behavior as revealed in free observation, directed observation, ratings, and tests; (2) taking the word of another person who has observed directly as in (1) above, especially reports based upon rating scales; and (3) asking a person directly about his behavior, as in questionnaires. While the last two methods are important and have unexplored possibilities for use in the language-arts program, we shall devote the remainder of the chapter to a consideration of the first.

IV. DIRECT OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES

Direct observation techniques may be classified under four headings: (1) free observation; (2) directed observation; (3) use of quality rating scales; and (4) use of objective tests.

1. Free Observation

Free observation is perhaps most frequently used in setting up goals or values. The pupils may be asked to examine a friendly letter and to state why it is a good letter or why they consider it poor.¹⁹ Or they may be asked to listen to the oral report of a classmate and to state the desirable and undesirable features of it. As long as the pupils do not have a definite set of values as a basis for the evaluation, it may be said to be free observation. The same may be said of an observation by the teacher or by an outside evaluator. We see then that in free observation the situation in which the behavior occurs may be controlled or uncontrolled, but that the aspects of behavior to be observed are not specified. Free observation may be of behavior directly, as of an oral report; reproduced behavior, as of a sound motion-picture of such a report; or a product of behavior, as of a letter or theme. Free observation is frequently the first step in setting up a directed observation procedure.

2. Directed Observation

In *directed observation* the situation in which the behavior occurs is not controlled, but the aspects of behavior to be observed are specified. When such observations are recorded, analyzed, weighted, and expressed quantitatively, the procedure meets some of the criteria of measurement, but these steps are not essential in evaluation. It is obvious that this technique may also be applied to reproduced behavior or to the products of behavior. Although certain aspects of the situation in which the behavior occurs may be controlled, e.g., it may take place in a certain place and deal with a specific topic, the peculiar value of this technique is that the

¹⁹ Marian M. Walch, "Letter Writing in the Elementary Grades," *Elementary English Review*, X (September, 1933), 169-73.

situation may be relatively uncontrolled. The development of directed observation has been especially useful in child welfare research stations with children too young to be controlled for the requirements of a test situation, or in the study of behavior characteristics which are likely to be seriously influenced by the requirements of a test situation. Examples are: (1) "nervous" habits of children, such as thumb sucking, nail biting, hair twisting, and posture; (2) behavior involving the virtues of honesty, kindness, courtesy, and respect for authority; (3) interests of children in objects, people, and activities; and (4) characteristics of motor behavior requiring co-ordination and skill. The nature of language expression, both written and oral, is such that it seems to belong in this directed observation category. It is so much the expression of the total personality with its peculiar background, interests, and thought processes that to restrict its expression to the extent necessary for a test situation tends to produce an unnatural and unreliable response.

Important advantages of directed observation in the language-arts program are: (1) the pupils may participate in setting the goals or the characteristics to be observed; (2) they may also participate directly in the evaluation; (3) the procedure tends to keep the criteria of desirable behavior always before the learner; (4) it may be applied at any time or to any activity involving language; and (5) it need not hamper spontaneous language expression.

The reliability of directed observation increases with the specificity of the characteristics to be observed and with each additional observation. Certainly the teacher of a group of pupils who knows what to observe should know more about the language needs of her pupils than any test score will reveal. The value of directed observation has been underemphasized in teacher training of recent years because of overemphasis on certain studies^{20, 21} which showed that teacher observation in the marking of essay type test papers was unreliable. In these studies the teachers were given the most meager opportunities to observe and were not told what to observe. A more recent study by Stalnaker,²² in which readers of College Entrance Examination Board examinations were instructed specifically on what to observe and the number of points to allow for each quality or element present, has demonstrated that such directed observation can be highly reliable. The reliability of grades obtained with this

²⁰ Daniel Starch and Edward C. Elliott, "Reliability of the Grading of High-School Work in English," *School Review*, XX (September, 1912), 442-57.

²¹ E. J. Ashbaugh, "Reducing the Variability in Teachers' Marks," *Journal of Educational Research*, IX (March, 1924), 185-98.

²² John M. Stalnaker, "Essay Examinations Reliably Read," *School and Society*, XLVI (November 20, 1937), 671-72.

method of scoring essay-type examinations ranged above .90 for all College Entrance Board examinations except English. The reliability for English was .84. There is reason to believe that properly trained observers can rate oral²³ as well as written English with satisfactory reliability and that the effectiveness of language teachers so trained will be much enhanced.

The failure of directed observation procedures to show satisfactory reliability is most frequently the result of lack of emphasis on the word *directed*. The qualities to be rated have been too gross and too undefined. What we need for evaluation purposes are specific and explicit statements of the qualities sought, with clear examples to illustrate each. Certainly it is difficult to understand how teaching can be effective without this clear understanding of goals. The tendency in evaluation to combine contributing qualities in language expression into a general quality rating tends to destroy the meaning and significance of such ratings from the standpoint of both measurement and evaluation. This has limited seriously the value of composition scales. Dolch²⁴ has demonstrated the low intercorrelations among even such general qualities as are rated by the Hillegas composition scale. Willing²⁵ found the intercorrelations among the formal aspects of language to range from .21 to .54 with an average of .37.

In recent years considerable attention has been given to the problem of helping teachers to develop directed observation procedures. Recently published textbooks emphasize this approach to evaluation. The twentieth yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals, *Language Arts in the Elementary School*, devotes several articles to such procedures.²⁶

²³ Lee Travis, "Diagnosis in Speech," *Educational Diagnosis*, pp. 399-434. Thirty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education (5835 Kimbark Avenue), 1935.

²⁴ E. W. Dolch, Jr., "More Accurate Use of Composition Scales," *English Journal*, XI (November, 1922), 536-44.

²⁵ Matthew H. Willing, *Valid Diagnosis in High School Composition*, p. 50. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 230. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1926.

²⁶ *Language Arts in the Elementary School*. Twentieth Yearbook of the Department of the Elementary School Principals. Washington: National Education Association, 1941:

- a) Doris Niles, "Conversation and Discussion," pp. 287-95.
- b) Ethel H. Lundin, "Learning To Make Short Talks," pp. 296-301.
- c) Minnie M. Glantz and M. Catherine Cohee, "Oral Language in the Primary Grades," pp. 259-68.
- d) Margaret C. Stevenson, "Oral Language in the Intermediate Grades," pp. 269-77.

3. Use of Quality Rating Scales

*Quality rating scales*²⁷ as applied to oral and written composition represent an application of the quantitative generalizations of psycho-physics to educational measurement. With few exceptions, the scales are based on the principle that differences that are equally often noticed are equal unless the differences are either always or never noticed.²⁸ Although the problem of establishing a series of quality specimens with equal distances (units) between them is the prime consideration in their construction, they cannot be considered as highly practical instruments of measurement. They require experience, discrimination, and judgment in their application. They lack the automaticity essential to usable instruments of measurement. They are primarily devices for guiding discrimination and recording judgments.

Quality scales also fail to meet important criteria of evaluation. Perhaps their most serious limitation is the over-all character of the rating. Pupils may find that their compositions rate high or low without knowing why they rate high or low. It is difficult to understand how such ratings can clarify goals, direct learning, or influence instruction in desirable ways. Certain of the so-called "diagnostic scales" attempt to analyze composition into its component parts and meet this criticism. The *Harvard-Newton Scale* differentiates between form and content. The *Willing Scale* differentiates between "story value" and "form value." The Van Wagenen *English Composition Scale* provides separate measures for narration, description, and exposition, analyzing each of these for "thought content," "structure," and "mechanics." Each of these is then further broken down into its constituent elements. In this breakdown the Van Wagenen scale embodies some of the characteristics essential to an effective evaluation instrument.

The composition quality rating scale assumes the traditional type of formal theme-writing language program. Every pupil is assumed to be able to demonstrate his theme-writing ability upon a given topic at a given day and hour. The extent of this control over the situation reduces the sampling of psychological factors involved to such an extent that the

²⁷ Excellent descriptions and criticisms of composition scales may be found in R. L. Lyman, *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language, and Composition*, pp. 134-57. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 36. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1929; Dora V. Smith, "Diagnosis of Difficulties in English," *Educational Diagnosis*, pp. 243-45. Thirty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education (5835 Kimbark Avenue), 1935.

²⁸ Edward L. Thorndike, "Handwriting," *Teachers College Record*, XI (March, 1910), 87-88.

reliability must of necessity be low. Pressey,²⁹ using the Willing scale, rated different narrative compositions of a fifth-grade class written two and three days apart. He obtained a correlation of .15 between the two ratings.

4. Use of Objective Tests

In *objective testing* the situation to which the subject responds is precisely controlled, and the response is recorded, weighted, and treated quantitatively. In fact, we have a set of "frozen" situations to which the subject responds, and we have a set of "frozen" judgments by which the responses are evaluated. Instruments of this nature have a high degree of automaticity. They may be administered and scored by a clerk. Equal units may be established by assuming a normal distribution of ability. All the requirements of relative measurements can be satisfied.

Objective tests have been designed to measure both the mechanical and the nonmechanical elements of English composition. The measurement of the nonmechanical elements is much more difficult. Relatively few such instruments have been devised, and most of these have been designed for use at the college level. There is no reason why these techniques should not be adapted for use in the lower schools.

Stalnaker³⁰ proposes that the ability to present ideas in an orderly fashion can be broken down into the following elements: (1) ability to express clearly one's purposes in presenting ideas, (2) ability to separate relevant from irrelevant materials, (3) ability to recognize proper co-ordination and subordination of ideas, and (4) ability to arrange ideas in proper sequence. He then proceeds to test these subordinate abilities by controlling all of the factors except the one he wishes to test, i.e., he controls the composition purpose and the materials. In measuring the ability to separate relevant from irrelevant materials he states the purpose of the composition: *To show why the price of tobacco today can be said to be unreasonably high.* He then presents nineteen different facts, some of which are totally irrelevant to the topic, and the subject is asked to check the irrelevant ideas. In testing the ability to recognize proper co-ordination and subordination of ideas he presents a sentence outline and requires the subject to indicate each statement, major or minor, that is relevant to the purpose expressed, that is out of its proper position in the outline, or that is wrongly co-ordinated or wrongly subordinated.

²⁹ S. L. Pressey, "Measurement of Progress in English in the Upper Grades," *Annual Conference on Educational Measurements Held at Indiana University*, p. 37. Bulletin of the Extension Division, Indiana University, Vol. VI, No. 12. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Bookstore, 1921.

³⁰ J. M. Stalnaker, "Testing the Ability To Organize," *English Journal* (college edition), XXII (September, 1933), 361-67.

Eurich³¹ has attempted to measure ability to organize ideas by presenting a series of topics in scrambled order and asking the subject to arrange them in outline form.

Morse and McCune³² have used similar test procedures in measuring the ability to distinguish facts from opinions, the relevancy of information in answering a question, the ability to evaluate sources of information, the ability to recognize statements supporting generalizations, and the ability to draw inferences.

Such instruments, which analyze into their elements the thought processes essential to the effective organization and presentation of ideas, give promise of becoming highly useful evaluation devices. Although they will meet many of the criteria of relative measurement when their validity is established, their greatest usefulness will probably be in evaluation as related to teaching. The objectives of composition will be clarified for both teachers and pupils. It will be possible with such instruments to make concrete to the pupils other composition goals than those of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage.

Objective tests designed to measure achievement in the mechanical aspects of English composition have been produced in abundance and considerable research has been directed toward determining which techniques yield the most valid measures. The general plan of such studies is as follows: (1) A criterion measure is established with an adequate sample of pupils at the educational level at which the tests are to be used. The criterion measure is usually based on the number of errors made in each category by the pupil in a sample of his free writing, the number of errors made in such a sample of material divided by the total number of opportunities for such errors, or the errors made in a dictation exercise in which the opportunities for error are controlled. (2) Several tests are then devised, utilizing different techniques, but all embodying the same sampling of content which curriculum studies have found to be appropriate at the grade levels tested. The variety of test techniques which may be used is very great, but in general they can be analyzed as follows: (a) The material is either dictated or presented in printed form. (b) It is either connected discourse or unrelated sentences, phrases, or words. (c) The types of errors for which the subject should seek are or are not stated. (d) The exact places where the subject should look for an error are or are not indicated. (e) If such places are indicated, alternate responses may

³¹ A. C. Eurich, "Measuring the Achievement of Objectives in Freshman English," *Studies in College Examinations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Committee on Educational Research, 1943.

³² Horace T. Morse and George H. McCune, *Selected Items for the Testing of Study Skills*. National Council for the Social Studies Bulletin, No. 15, September, 1940.

be provided which require the subject to recognize the correct one, or he may be required to recall and write the correct response. Possible combinations of these features in tests are almost unlimited. (3) The optimum administration time for each of the tests is then determined and the validity coefficients compared for equal units of testing time.

Lannholm³³ states the following requirements of an acceptable criterion measure of ability in capitalization and punctuation: (1) The manner in which the error situations are presented to the pupil in the criterion test should be as nearly as possible like that in which they are presented to him in actual writing. (2) It should include an adequate sampling of all of the important writing situations in which it is known that pupils make frequent or crucial errors in capitalization or punctuation. (3) It should present the same situations to all pupils being tested. He then evaluates the three commonly used criteria of validity. The *error count* based on a sample of free writing is rejected because it meets only one of the essential characteristics, i.e., the first. It fails to control the situations to which the pupil responds, and hence pupils of superior ability may actually make more errors than those of inferior ability simply because they attempt more difficult forms. The *error quotient* is rejected because Powell³⁴ obtained a correlation of .98 between *error count* and *error quotient* based on over two thousand words of free writing by each of 302 ninth-grade pupils. The *dictation* criterion is accepted as the best because it satisfies all of the essential requirements, i.e., the situations are presented in a natural way, the type and number of situations are controlled, and all pupils respond to all situations.

Lannholm made comparisons between six techniques for measuring ability to capitalize and eight techniques for measuring ability to punctuate, utilizing the dictation test as the criterion measure. Two capitalization tests yielded the same mean validity coefficient, .62. Directions for the two techniques follow:

FORM A

Directions: All capital letters have been omitted from the sentences in this test. You are to indicate where you think capital letters should be used by drawing a heavy vertical line through the first letter in each word which should be capitalized. There may be more than one word to be capitalized in any sentence. Be careful not to mark any words which should *not* be capitalized. The sample exercise has been marked correctly.

Sample: ~~Where~~ did ~~Napoleon~~ die?

³³ Gerald V. Lannholm, "The Measurement of Ability in Capitalization and Punctuation," *Journal of Experimental Education*, VIII (September, 1939), 55-86.

³⁴ R. L. Powell, *Valid Testing and Diagnosis in the Mechanics of Ninth-Grade English Composition*, p. 85. Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1932.

FORM P

Directions: In the sentences in this form, many capital letters have been omitted. You are to read each sentence carefully and then study each word which has a number printed under it. If you think this word should begin with a capital letter, mark a cross in the pair of parentheses under the "c" on the answer sheet opposite the number of the word. If you think the word should begin with a small letter, place a cross in the parentheses under the "s." Do not pay any attention to the words that do not have numbers under them. The sample exercise has been marked correctly.

Sample: (On test page)

(On answer sheet)

Did john like your speech?

	c	s
1.	(X)	()
2.	()	(X)

67

2

The two highest ranking punctuation tests yielded mean validity coefficients of .78 for Form F and .67 for Form K.

FORM F

Directions: This test consists of a number of sentences with all of the punctuation marks omitted. You are to go through the sentences carefully and place the proper punctuation marks wherever you think they are needed. Make the marks very distinct and be sure to place them exactly where they belong. Do not put marks where no punctuation is needed. The sample exercise has been marked correctly.

Sample: Isn't John going to school with us?

FORM K

Directions: This test consists of a number of sentences in which punctuation marks are needed. In many places in the sentences three punctuation choices are given. After studying each sentence carefully you are to consider each of these places separately, decide which punctuation is necessary at this place, and then underline the proper punctuation. In some places, punctuation marks may not be needed. In these places, you should underline the pair of parentheses which does not enclose any punctuation marks. The sample exercise has been marked correctly.

Sample: (Isn't) (Isn't) (Is'nt) John going to () () (-) be with us (.) (:) (?)

Using a list dictation spelling test of 150 words having a reliability of .98, as a criterion measure, Cook³⁵ evaluated seven techniques for measuring spelling ability. The two highest ranking techniques had the same validity coefficient (.85) for a twelve-minute test period when each test was administered at the optimum rate. The two techniques were as follows:

²⁵ Walter W. Cook, *The Measurement of General Spelling Ability Involving Controlled Comparisons between Techniques*. University of Iowa Studies in Education, Vol. VI, No. 6, February, 1932.

TEST 5

Directions: Some of the words in the following list are spelled incorrectly, others are correct. If a word is spelled correctly place a "c" on the line opposite it. If it is spelled incorrectly write the correct spelling of the word on the line opposite it, as in the sample below.

Sample:

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| 1. aranged | <u>arranged</u> |
| 2. article | <u>c</u> |
| 3. asuring | <u>assuring</u> |

TEST 6

Directions: Write the correct spelling of the underlined word in each of the following sentences.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. It was an <u>ekskqizit</u> piece of lace. | <u>exquisite</u> |
| 2. I am <u>greatfull</u> for your assistance. | <u>grateful</u> |

Cook also evaluated the same seven techniques, using as the criterion measure a spelling error count with a reliability of .93 based on over two thousand words of free writing by 196 ninth-grade pupils. The three techniques showing the highest validity per unit of testing time, .69 for all three, were:

TEST 2 (corrected for chance success)

Directions: If the spelling of a word is RIGHT, put a circle around the R in front of it; if it is WRONG, encircle the W.

Sample:

- | | | |
|---|---|------------|
| R | Ⓜ | 1. aranged |
| Ⓜ | W | 2. article |
| R | Ⓜ | 3. asuring |

TEST 4

Directions: Each of the following words is spelled in four ways. You are to select the correct spelling of each word and put its NUMBER (not the word itself) in the parentheses at the right.

Sample:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----|
| (1) | 1. fourty | 2. forty | 3. fortay | 4. fourtey | (2) |
| (2) | 1. fought | 2. faught | 3. foght | 4. faut | (1) |

TEST 7

Directions: Many of the following sentences, but not all of them, contain misspelled words. You are to find these misspelled words, underline them, and write the correct spelling in the space to the right of each sentence. If all of the words in a sentence are spelled correctly, place a C in the space.

Sample:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Place the picture on the <u>bulliten</u> board. | <u>bulletin</u> |
| 2. I have no apology to make. | <u>C</u> |

Powell³⁶ examined the validity of three procedures for measuring pupils' ability in certain formal elements of English mechanics: error count in pupils' free writing; error quotient in pupils' free writing; and error analysis of performance in a long proofreading test. He also determined the relationship between errors in free writing and general quality ratings of the same material using the *Hudelson English Composition Scale*. The error counts were based on over two thousand words of free writing by each of 302 ninth-grade pupils. The proofreading tests contained 569 "planted" errors and required 160 minutes of testing time. The major findings were as follows. The correlations between the error count and error quotient were: for all categories combined, .98; for capitalization, .98; for grammar, .92; and for punctuation, .89. The correlations between the error quotient and the proofreading test were: for combined categories, .52; for grammar, .52; for capitalization, .46; and for punctuation, .42. The general quality rating, based on the Hudelson scale, correlated with errors in composition, .42, and with error quotients, .41. Powell concludes that the error count and error quotients measure almost exactly the same functions and that this function is quite different from that measured by the proofreading test. On the basis of logic he accepts the proofreading test as the most valid. He concludes further that the mechanical and general quality elements of composition have a low relationship.

One of the first studies of the type described here was by Willing³⁷ in which he determined the validity of several of the earlier tests in English. The criterion measure was established for each pupil by a count of errors in twelve hundred words of his free writing. The errors were tabulated and classified under six categories: (1) spelling, (2) capitalization, (3) punctuation, (4) grammar, (5) sentence structure, and (6) word usage. The validity and reliability coefficients reported by Willing are summarized in the accompanying table.

Those concerned with measurement in the field of English find little cause for enthusiasm in these studies. The criterion measure to be used must still be accepted on the basis of logic rather than demonstrated superiority. The best test techniques to use for a given purpose cannot be selected with assurance on the basis of the evidence presented. The studies were carefully conducted, but the results are inconclusive. The standardized tests available are built to cover a wide grade range, while the sampling of content is thin and frequently faulty. They have a limited range of usefulness in school surveys and in the ranking of students of high and low achievement. It would be difficult to demonstrate that

³⁶ Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

³⁷ Willing, *Valid Diagnosis in High School Composition*, *op. cit.*

their influence on classroom instruction has been more beneficial than harmful. Such tests tend to focus too much attention on the mere mechanics of English, which may serve to stunt rather than to promote development of power and interest in language expression. When such tests assume their proper relative place in the instructional program and

TEST VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS*

Name of Test	Categories	Validity	Reliability
A. Major Tests			
1. Briggs Form.....	CPS	.45	.76
2. Cross English.....	PSGW	.63	.70
3. Pressey Combined.....	CPSGW	.74	.87
4. General Correction of Error.....	CPSGW	.73	.92
B. Category Tests			
5. Pressey Capitalization.....	C	.46	.75
6. Cross Punctuation.....	P	.48
7. G.C.E. Sentence Structure.....	P	.53	.87
8. Pressey Punctuation.....	P	.55	.78
9. Cross Sentence Structure.....	S	.34
10. G.C.E. Sentence Structure.....	S	.45	.87
11. G.C.E. Gram.—Word.....	GW	.53	.88
12. Pressey Gram.....	GW	.47	.79
13. Stanford.....	GW	.51	.80
14. Wilson Lang.....	GW	.58	.90
15. Seven S. Spelling.....	SP	.63

*From Willing, rearranged.

are related directly to the goals of a given class for a given period, their usefulness can probably be demonstrated.

In bringing this section on direct observation techniques to a close it should be pointed out that such instruments of evaluation as anecdotal records, stenographic reports, sound recordings, and still and moving pictures are simply devices for reproducing language behavior or for preserving the products of such behavior in order that it may be evaluated. They serve the same purpose in preserving certain forms of behavior that pencil and paper serve with other types of behavior.

CHAPTER X

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IN LANGUAGE-ARTS INSTRUCTION

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In any field of instruction in which there are as many persons of such widely divergent types of preparation as are engaged in teaching the speaking and writing of English, it is inevitable that great differences in instructional practices and beliefs should develop. While these differences give interesting variety to the language instruction available, they also tend to confuse the student, particularly the young student in the public schools, and to interfere with continuous growth in ability to speak and write. The general quality of English compositions written by pupils during their first year in high-school classes in "composition and rhetoric" has sometimes been found to be inferior to the quality produced by pupils in the previous year without such special instruction. In so far as possible, the instruction given to young persons should be consistent from year to year and in harmony with psychological principles that are known to facilitate learning.

The members of the committee whose responsibility it has been to prepare this yearbook are keenly aware of the lack of conclusive research evidence on many points that affect the teaching of language. They are, however, deeply interested in and well acquainted with the research that has been done, and they are also familiar with the classroom practices of a great many successful teachers in this field. It has seemed desirable, therefore, to include in this yearbook a brief summary of their points of view with regard to some of the significant issues that affect actual practices in teaching oral and written expression in English. Four groups of issues will be treated, dealing with (1) instructional objectives and content, (2) instructional organization and materials, (3) instructional techniques, and (4) instructional standards. Only a few of the issues on which differences of opinion and practice have developed can be discussed under each heading. Each member of the committee would probably state his point of view on any given issue in somewhat different language than the

chairman has used in this chapter, but the discussions which follow reflect general principles upon which the committee is unanimous.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

1. Oral Language

Should more time and attention be given to instruction in oral language than to instruction in written language?

It is readily admitted that the average person makes much more use of spoken than of written language in communicating with other people. In a traditional school, however, an abnormally large proportion of the pupil's expression is in written form, because it is possible for the teacher to carry home the record of such expression and to examine it at leisure. In life outside the classroom, on the other hand, the average person speaks many times as many sentences as he writes each day. Even those who write large numbers of letters each day usually do so by speaking to a stenographer or to a mechanical voice-recording machine.

As McKee has pointed out (chap. ii, p. 28), "most of the child's difficulties in language have their origin in and are perpetuated by speech rather than by writing." When the child begins to try to convey his own ideas or impressions to others through writing, they are the same thoughts he has already developed and expressed to those near him through speech. Translating these oral sentences into written form does not at first involve much change in their language form or content. If the child has learned to speak well, the development of ability to write well involves primarily the addition of certain mechanical skills and writing conventions to the good language habits already acquired. On the other hand, if oral expression has been poorly taught, the child may easily come to look upon all the written language standards as new and belonging to an entirely different tongue from that which he has already learned to speak. As McKee says, "All this means that instruction in oral expression is basic to instruction in written expression at all grade levels, that sound teaching of oral expression will lighten the instructional load in written expression, and that most of the practice to be provided in expression should be oral rather than written" (p. 29).

It should probably be pointed out, however, that writing is a splendid means of clarifying and organizing one's ideas, whether those ideas are to be expressed later in oral or in written form. Writing is in a very real sense a study tool, and as such it needs to be carefully taught and frequently practiced. During a limited period of time and with particular individuals who have immediate special needs for instruction in written expression, more time and attention may appropriately be given to written than to oral expression, but over a long period of time and with ele-

mentary-school pupils in general, the emphasis should be primarily on teaching pupils to speak well. The use of electrically-operated voice-recording instruments may soon make it possible for teachers to preserve records of a pupil's oral expressions that will be just as objective and permanent as the written records that have been at least partially responsible in the past for the relative overemphasis on instruction in writing.

2. Creative Language

How much emphasis should be given to the development of "creative language"?

In spite of everything that any teacher could possibly do, not every child in a class could be taught to write poetry of a quality that would be accepted for publication by the "literary" magazines. Not every child could be taught to write stories or magazine articles that would be published and paid for, even by popular magazines. Some children, in spite of the best instruction that can be given them, will not be able to make up and tell good original stories, even orally to their friends. Individual differences cannot be eliminated by instruction, however skilful the teacher may be. Some speakers and writers will always be far more "creative" than others.

This should not be taken to mean, however, that some children should never be permitted or encouraged to "create" in language. Sincerity and originality in expression should be respected and cultivated in every child. In some cases, it is true, a sincere expression may reveal an unsocial or even a perverted attitude in a child, but the suppression of his expression of that attitude is likely to do far more damage to the individual's personality than its expression could possibly do to his fellows. Unless the child is encouraged to express what he really feels, the teacher is likely to fail to sense the presence of an abnormal feeling, which would make it impossible for her to do anything effective toward correcting the antisocial or other undesirable attitude responsible for that feeling and toward training the child in how to express sincere feeling without offending listeners or readers and without failing to achieve his purpose. The teacher of language must always be interested in the development of desirable social attitudes and consequently in training boys and girls in how to use language to promote wholesome human relationships. Language is an instrument of communication, and it should be taught for its contribution to wholesome personality and co-operative citizenship rather than as an end in itself.

One of the sure ways to develop a dislike for poetic or other creative expression is to require every pupil to write a specific amount of it on specified dates. In order to develop such latent creative powers as any

child may have, the teacher must be constantly alert to sincerity and individuality in the expressions used by her pupils and must so arrange matters that when a child does express himself with originality and sincerity he receives recognition and satisfaction because of it. She must bear in mind, however, that in most cases the approval of his classmates and peers is more stimulating and satisfying than mere verbal commendation by the teacher. She must also be alert to distinguish clearly the sincere expressions from those that are artificially put together merely to attract attention.

The general atmosphere of the classroom should always be friendly to sincere expression of individuality and distinctly unfriendly to artificial and insincere verbalization. Every child should be encouraged to express *himself* in language as well as in other media (musical tones, color, black and white lines, wood, etc.). No child should be penalized, however, if after strong motivation and stimulating teacher guidance, he has been unable, as have others in the class, to express his ideas in original rhythmic or colorful language. Individuality and sincerity of expression should be emphasized constantly, for they promote not only wholesomely integrated personality in the individual, but also interesting and profitable social relations. Appreciation of originality and appropriateness in the expressions of others will be developed most rapidly by personal experiences in trying to express similar ideas and feelings in one's own words, but real "creative expression" can never be forced by teacher or school requirements. It should, however, be given adequate opportunity and encouragement to develop in all children.

3. Sense of Responsibility for Participation

How important is the development in children of a sense of personal responsibility for social participation through language?

What real contribution to co-operative social, political, or industrial relationships will have been made when an individual has learned in language classes how to construct correct sentences, how to pronounce and to spell important words, the correct form to be used in a letter to a friend, and the approved forms and procedures to be followed in a public discussion, if he has not also developed sound judgment as to when he should participate in a discussion and a strong sense of responsibility for answering the letters he receives and for making use in social situations of the other language skills he has acquired?

The mere personal satisfaction that one might possibly feel from being able to say, "I could write a better story than that," or "I could make a more effective report than John did," is hardly worth the time and energy required to develop the necessary language skills. The teacher's instruc-

tional program and purposes should give just as much attention to developing in her pupils a keen sense of responsibility for using their skills in writing and speaking for genuine co-operative social purposes as to the development of ability to speak and write well. What one could say, but does not say, makes no contribution whatever to the greater understanding or pleasure of his potential audience.

Further discussion of the teacher's obligation to sensitize the pupil to his responsibilities for using speech and writing to inform and bring satisfaction to others may be found in chapter ii, pages 12-21. The obligation is so important that a teacher's professional success in teaching elementary language should be judged in terms of the amount of growth made by her pupils in their feelings of responsibility for speaking and writing quite as much as in terms of their knowledge of approved ways to speak and write. The evidence of instructional success that is most crucial is what boys and girls actually write and say in social situations that are not a part of the language teacher's program, rather than what they write and say in the language class or what they may have learned how to write and say. In order to develop this strong sense of responsibility for giving information when it should be given, for writing a letter that should be written, or for telling a story that would be appropriate and entertaining, the teacher may upon many occasions have to subordinate temporarily such matters as correct forms, clarity of expression, and logical organization of ideas.

4. Grammar

How much grammar should be taught in the elementary grades?

The teacher who has primary responsibility for developing the speaking and writing habits of young persons should attempt to instruct them so effectively that they will speak and write outside the school clearly, correctly, and pleasantly enough that what they say will receive maximum attention and that the way they say it will attract little or no attention. The best possible idea or suggestion an individual can offer is likely to be less effective and helpful than it should be if it is poorly expressed. When the listener or reader finds it necessary to pause and examine an inadequate or inaccurate expression in order to determine what the author intended to say, a certain amount of momentum and enthusiasm for the idea is lost. A speaker or writer who has an important message to convey should always consider the language in which the message is phrased in order to be sure that what he is saying will not be weakened or lost because of any defect in the way he is saying it. It is the language teacher's responsibility to help her pupils to develop those habits of speaking and writing which will enable them in their social, political, occupational, and business relations with other people to express their desires, ideas, and

feelings in language which, while attracting little or no attention to itself, will produce maximum understanding and satisfaction in those who read or hear it.

English grammar summarizes in as logical and systematic manner as possible the preferred inflections and other means of showing the relationships and functions of words to each other in the polite speech and writing of well-educated persons. In some localities an individual who spoke in strict conformity with the preferred usages of cultivated English people would find that the way he spoke was attracting attention away from what he was trying to say. In such a situation, even the most scholarly person, if he were more interested in getting results than in being correct, would probably employ the local idiom or pronunciation. Teachers of English, however, must prepare their students to speak and write effectively in the widest possible range of English-speaking localities. While the use of a local dialect may be useful at a given place or moment, the preferred usages of cultivated people throughout the English-speaking world as summarized in English grammar should supply the standards toward which the language habits of pupils are to be developed.

Using English grammar as a source of standards for speaking and writing is very different, however, from using it as verbal subject matter to be memorized. A child can learn to say, "I am a boy," rather than, "I is a boy," long before he ever comes to school. The same child may, however, go to school for six or eight years before he learns to state or to apply the grammatical rules governing this usage. The important matter is that he acquire good language habits rather than that he memorize abstract statements of the rules. Only in so far as the learning of a grammatical term or rule can help him to develop better speaking and writing habits is the average individual justified in spending the time and effort necessary to learn the term or rule. As indicated on pages 175-81 by Dr. Broening, however, a skilful teacher who has experienced the generalizations of grammar as tools for the facilitation of effective expression, rather than as rules for the restriction of communication, can be more helpful in developing effective language in her pupils than she could be without such understanding of grammar.

The generalizations of grammar should be developed in the pupil's mind inductively, through personal experiences. A student should usually be able to understand and use a term long before he can define it exactly—if such a definition is ever necessary in his case. It is probably advisable to teach the name of the grammatical concept when the concept itself is being developed. There is no important advantage in developing the "verb" concept, for example, before the fifth or sixth grade, and when it is developed it should be called "verb" rather than "action word." As soon

as a child understands such terms as *subject*, *predicate*, *adjective*, and *pronoun*, whether it be in the fifth grade or in the seventh, the terms may be used effectively in the correction of his spoken and written expressions. The total amount and the specific items of functional grammar to be taught before the end of the elementary-school period depend upon the individual student's needs, capacities, and interests. Whatever grammar is taught in these grades, however, should be developed inductively in connection with vital writing needs and used as practical means for improving specific language habits rather than as verbal subject matter to be memorized and recited in class.

5. Diagraming Sentences

Under what circumstances should children be taught to diagram sentences?

Individuals differ in their characteristic ways of looking at relationships, as well as in their abilities to read or to spell. One person may grasp easily the relationship of John and Bob from hearing the statement that "John's father and Bob's mother are first cousins," while someone else might grasp the relationship much more readily from seeing a diagram. A blueprint of a new house may show a builder the exact relationship of every detail to every other detail, but it may indicate relatively little regarding these relationships to a person who is not accustomed to reading blueprints. Some students, after they have learned to diagram sentences, obtain real thrills from exercising their newly acquired skills, while others find no satisfaction whatever in them. Those who enjoy diagraming sentences often feel certain that anyone who wants to write well should be required to diagram sentences as a basic part of his training in language.

The diagraming of sentences is extremely interesting and useful to those who see relationships graphically, but of distinctly less value to those who do not look at relationships in that characteristic way. If a teacher finds that a diagram of the sequence of steps to be taken helps a certain pupil to learn to dance, for example, then perhaps that pupil would also be helped in learning sentence construction by being taught to diagram sentences. The most generally used procedure in teaching a youth to dance, to play a new game, or to write a sentence is to have him go through the physical and intellectual activities involved with as much success and consequent satisfaction as possible. In the relatively small number of cases in which a child is discovered who learns more readily from studying a graphic diagram before attempting to go through an activity, there can be little doubt of the value of teaching him the diagraming of sentences. In most cases, however, greater educational returns will be obtained from the time and energy spent by the teacher and her pupil if their attention is centered on what the pupil wishes to say and on

whether the sentences he constructs do or do not convey his message effectively.

In short, a child should be taught to diagram sentences when the teacher is quite certain that such language experiences will really facilitate his learning to speak and write in more effective sentences. For a majority of the children in the elementary grades, the solving of crossword puzzles is likely to yield as large returns in effective use of language as the diagraming of sentences.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION AND MATERIALS

1. Separate Language Periods

How early in the school program should special periods be set aside for instruction in the language arts?

A child's oral language habits are usually rather well established before he enters the first grade. In many cases some of the speech habits he brings to school are of a nature that are likely to handicap his later effectiveness in social situations unless they are corrected. It is a definite responsibility of the public school teacher to help the child to free himself from such language handicaps as soon as possible. Whether the first-grade teacher should begin helping a pupil to improve his oral language as soon as he enters school depends upon many factors, including the child's consciousness of his own need and his emotional adjustment to the classroom situation.

The vital importance of one's language habits in his school activities and social life and the damaging effects of language handicaps upon the normal development of his personality make it desirable for the school to provide daily attention to the development of facility in the use of language, beginning not later than the second grade. This does not mean that a teacher should begin in the second grade to set aside a certain period of each day for language lessons. The time of day and the number of minutes spent on language may vary widely, but language instruction should not be neglected. The amount of time spent on language by various groups and individuals in a class may also vary, depending upon the language readiness and specific needs of the individual pupil. An efficient instructional program involves discovery by the teacher of the specific abilities, interests, and needs of each pupil, accompanied and followed by intelligent provision for explanations, activities, practice, and review in terms of these individual needs.

A special "language period," in the mechanistic sense, that would lead the teacher at a certain time each day to say to herself, "Now it is time for me to teach language," is of doubtful importance. Doubt as to the

value of such a language period increases greatly if the teaching during the period consists of recitations and drills by all members of the class over the same pages of a text or workbook. Definite language objectives must be established, not only in the mind of the teacher, but also in the mind of each student. These objectives should also be attacked by each pupil in certain practical sequences, but this does not mean that all the pupils in a given class can attack and attain the same language objectives at identical times, or even in the same grades. Individual differences in readiness to learn, in rapidity of learning, and hence in practical need for learning a given language habit increase rapidly with age and make uniform progress by all members of a class impossible.

2. Textbooks

How and to what extent should language textbooks be used?

Three degrees of textbook use may be readily distinguished. One teacher may teach language without providing her pupils with any textbook. Another may ask all her pupils to use the same textbook, and still another teacher may provide the class with many different textbooks in elementary language.

Where no textbook whatever is available to the pupils, the teacher must know exactly what language is to be taught, the best sequence to be followed by pupils in learning desirable language habits, and the most effective procedures to be employed in teaching the various language items to pupils of varying capacities, interests, and probable future needs. Obviously, the number of teachers who are sufficiently well trained and experienced in language-arts instruction to meet these high qualifications is limited. In most of our public schools, an elementary-grade teacher must teach not only the speaking, spelling, and writing facets of language arts, but also the listening and reading facets, plus the various social studies, arithmetic, and science. To qualify one's self to teach all these subjects effectively, even with the help of the best textbooks on the market, is no simple task, but to prepare one's self to teach even a few of them well without textbooks requires additional years of thoughtful study and experience. It is probable, however, that the number of teachers capable of teaching oral and written expression without a textbook in the hands of each pupil is increasing, although slowly.

In classes where all the pupils have copies of a single textbook, the teacher should be keenly aware of the limitations and dangers inherent in the use of that particular text. While it is probable that the author or authors of the textbook have given longer and more thoughtful study than has the average teacher to what should be taught and to how it may usually be taught effectively, it is certain that the authors know far less

than the teacher should know about what each of her pupils already knows and can or cannot do effectively. Only the teacher can be aware of the actual home environment from which each pupil comes, the types of activity that interest him and for the sake of which he would probably wish to improve his speaking and writing. The textbook writer can do no more than prepare suggestions that would be appropriate for typical children in those communities with which he has had experience or from which he has had reports. These suggestions may be suitable at best for a majority of the pupils in a given class, but the teacher herself should be able to supplement them for those of her pupils who have unusual needs.

In spite of their assumed special competence, textbook writers differ in the emphasis they give to various language skills and habits. A given textbook may provide no help whatever in the development of some language habit which is extremely important for the pupils of a particular class. For example, the adopted textbook may make no provision for developing the pupil's sense of personal responsibility for participating in conversations, discussions, and varied social activities. Whatever the omissions in the textbook may be, the teacher should be fully aware of them and should be ready to supply the instruction and practice needed to fill the gaps. She should also be aware of any overemphasis in the adopted textbook and be prepared to omit pages and sections that are of little or no value to her pupils.

Most important, of course, is the necessity that the teacher be able to use any adopted textbook to meet the individual needs of her pupils. Although a class may be composed of pupils who have spent five or more years in school and the textbook may be well suited to normal sixth-grade pupils, a few of the pupils may be able to spell, punctuate, paragraph, and speak as well as average high-school graduates, and a few others in the class may not be able to do these things better than average second-grade pupils. Whether no textbook, a single textbook, or many textbooks are used in a class, the teacher must plan the work so that each pupil is making definite progress toward better speaking and writing habits, even though the members of the class differ widely in the levels at which they are working toward these goals.

The many-textbook approach to a school subject began in certain subject-matter fields. Recognizing that each textbook writer in American history, for example, would probably emphasize certain phases of that history and neglect others, teachers began to refer their pupils to a number of textbooks in the hope that in this way students would be able to obtain more complete and unbiased concepts. When a teacher tries to use this multiple-textbook approach in the development of speaking and writing habits, however, there are serious dangers of confusing the stu-

dents and of blocking rather than facilitating their progress. Under the guidance of an unusually competent teacher, a student of high academic ability may derive real help and satisfaction from consulting different language textbooks about a point on which he is seeking help, but under a less competent teacher even the most able students are likely to achieve far less than they should. It is possible to individualize language instruction effectively when using several books for reference and practice purposes, although it requires the same high but rare qualifications as are necessary in the teacher who is to teach language successfully without any textbook.

3. Workbooks

To what extent may workbooks be substituted for textbooks in teaching the language arts?

Workbooks in the language arts usually omit entirely or provide only very brief explanations and discussions of the items to be learned. In those cases in which more adequate explanations and discussions are provided along with practice materials, the term "workbook" is scarcely applicable. Such publications are essentially textbooks, even though in paper covers, and they should be critically judged by textbook standards. Informal discussion of a language item by the members of a class is often a helpful way to secure understanding of the item, but workbooks do not make provision for any such discussions. The typical language workbook alone cannot provide an adequate instructional program.

One of the most serious limitations of workbooks is that they can affect oral expression only slightly, if at all. As has been stated earlier in this yearbook, "instruction in oral expression is basic to instruction in written expression at all grade levels." (See pp. 28-29.) The teacher who attempts to teach oral and written expression by using a workbook instead of a real textbook must supply from other sources practically all the instruction and practice in oral expression and most of the instruction and practice in written expression. In order to be able to fill these gaps in the instructional program successfully from outside sources, the teacher must be as well trained and experienced in teaching the language arts as if she were using no textbook or workbook at all.

McKee has grouped the items which need to be taught in oral and written English into four large groups (p. 13). The first group includes items having to do with the selection of the ideas to be expressed. A workbook might perhaps be developed which would provide a certain amount of practice on some of the items in this group, so far as written expression is concerned, but as a matter of fact the workbooks now available provide little or no practice in these items. The second group includes items essen-

tial to expressing ideas simply, clearly, and exactly enough that those to whom one is speaking or writing will understand just what is meant. Here again it might be possible to make a workbook that would suggest or provide a real audience or genuine readers, but this has not so far been done. The workbooks now available give practically no practice in adapting one's written expressions to any other reader than the teacher. The average pupil would probably have difficulty in feeling that his teacher might not understand what he meant to write and still more difficulty in learning from the writing he does for the teacher how to express himself clearly and exactly enough to be understood by his young cousin or a stranger.

The third group includes items essential to expressing one's self pleasantly and in accordance with polite social customs. Most of these items deal with oral expressions and could not readily be included in a workbook, except through stenographic accounts of conversations. Even those items that do involve written expressions appear very rarely in existing workbooks, and it would probably be impossible ever to develop through workbooks the all-important sense of personal responsibility for writing these items outside the classroom when courtesy and human kindness would indicate a need for writing them.

The fourth group includes items essential to correctness in expression. Current workbooks give practically all their attention to this one group of items, but confine their practice materials almost entirely to correctness in written expression. Workbook exercises can be useful in building habits of usage in written work if employed intelligently in terms of the individual pupil's specific needs. At best, however, a language workbook can only be supplementary to a well-planned textbook or curriculum and a well-prepared teacher.

4. Special Teacher of Language

Should the teaching of oral and written expression be done by a specialist in language instruction rather than by the regular classroom teacher?

Oral and written expression are taught by the public schools in order to enable the individual to participate more effectively in the social, political, and economic life of the modern world, as well as in order to give the individual the personal satisfactions that come from being able without hesitation or embarrassment to inform and entertain other persons. Language is not, therefore, a set of facts to be added to one's store of knowledge, but a set of practical habits to be used in every activity of life. In order to be available for use in life activities, these habits should be acquired in connection with such activities rather than in a lifeless classroom vacuum. Growth in desirable habits of oral and written expression

should occur in every school experience. If no efforts are made to develop these habits except in a special language period conducted by a special teacher of language, little of practical social value need be expected from the school's instruction in language.

Language is basic to learning in all areas of knowledge. What one learns in any situation are his own reactions. What one feels, or thinks, or does when that particular situation appears again are the things which he felt or thought or did before and which in the previous instance brought him satisfaction or relief. The student in an arithmetic class, for example, will later remember what he himself says or writes or thinks, rather than what the teacher believes she is saying. Unless the child learns to speak and to write more effectively in his classes in mathematics, science, social studies, and literature, his learning in these fields will be far less effective than it should be, and he will not be as able as he should be later to use language for his own and for society's benefit. Language habits should be developed in the kinds of situations in which they are expected to operate later. Attempts to teach language as something that is distinct and separate from other school activities are certain to be less fruitful than they should be. This is the danger that must be faced in turning over the teaching of the language arts to a special teacher.

The employment of a special supervisor or helping teacher in language to supplement and improve the instructional program of the regular elementary classroom teachers has often been very successful, but the employment of a specialist in language to take over the whole burden of teaching oral and written expression is undesirable. Whether under the guidance of a special supervisor or not, the regular classroom teacher must hold herself responsible for stimulating, suggesting, guiding, and evaluating the language activities of her pupils, regardless of the subject matter with which these activities may deal.

5. School Subjects as Sources of Language Materials

To what extent should the other school subjects be used as sources of materials for instructional activities in language?

As has been indicated frequently in this yearbook, the various other subjects taught in school are rich in materials that may be used in conversation, discussion, oral and written reports, and other language activities. In using the content of a school subject as a source of materials for an instructional activity in language, the teacher should exercise care to see that the child's motivation is strong and sincere and that the social situation is not artificial. If a child undertakes to make a report to the class on the products of Argentina, for example, he should be required to consult sources other than the geography textbook being used by the

class and to report pertinent facts that would probably be new and interesting to the other members of the class. There would be no real social purpose in reporting things that the members of the class had already read. Unless the materials to be reported are new to the pupils to whom the report is to be made, there would be no vital reason for selecting and organizing the facts carefully, for stating them so clearly and exactly that the members of the class could all understand them, for speaking in a clear and pleasant voice, or for correctness in such matters as pronunciation, sentence structure, and word usage. In other words, practice in oral and written English, if it is to produce desirable learning in the child who is practicing, must be carried on under the same types of vital social situations as those in which the learning is expected to operate afterward. A subject-matter textbook which is in the hands of every member of the class can rarely be very useful as a source of ideas that will be so new to the other members that any pupil will feel a heavy social responsibility for presenting them well, either orally or in writing.

Many important situations in life outside the school have little in common with situations which normally arise in subject-matter classes. In order to help her pupils to speak and write effectively in these vital non-academic situations, the teacher of language dares not depend solely on other school subjects for the materials to be used in her instruction. She should permit pupils in her language classes to introduce materials from all the varied types of life activities in which they are likely later to need to speak and write well. To quote McKee, "There is no need for the teacher to supply content for pupils to talk and write about; her task is to stimulate the pupils to want to talk and write about the ideas they have and to teach them how to express those ideas well" (p. 32). Whether a pupil's language activity arises from a class in some other school subject, from an assignment by the editor of the school paper, from a responsibility in the local Boy Scout organization, or from a routine duty in his family circle, the alert teacher will seek to strengthen the child's desire to speak or write well and will help him to improve his skills and standards of achievement in that activity.

6. Language Instruction by Activity Units

To what extent should activity units from many discrete areas be used as bases for language instruction?

Instruction in oral and written expression, whether provided in a language class or elsewhere, is intended to help the student to express his ideas and feelings effectively in all kinds of life activities, regardless of the exact place or time of such activities. The practical purposes of the individual in the varied life activities in which he will later need to express

himself in written or spoken language cannot all be foreseen, and some of them cannot easily be brought into an elementary-school classroom in any realistic manner. Those who are most competent in the teaching of speaking and writing habits are agreed, however, that the purposes of the learner in the classroom should be as vital and as identical as possible with the life purposes to be served later through the use of the speaking and writing habits being learned. The learner must be able to recognize a later life situation, including his own purpose or feeling of need, as identical with a learning situation to which he has already learned appropriate language responses. In so far as it is possible, the classroom learning situations must duplicate the vital situations outside the classroom in which the language habits being learned are later to be used.

Activities from as many different areas of living as possible should therefore be used as opportunities for teaching boys and girls to write and speak more effectively. As indicated by Dean Durrell, "Practice in the language abilities in which he is weak takes on added zest when the skills are to be utilized immediately" (p. 107). Being told what is courteous to say in welcoming an important guest, practice in the logical selection and organization of ideas to be expressed, exercises in the construction of clear, understandable sentences, and drill in the usages considered correct by cultured persons can all be very effective, if the pupil feels at the time a definite need to use that skill or information in order to serve some purpose that is really important to him.

This does not mean, however, that the teacher should drag into the language class a project in boat building, particularly if the same pupils are already engaged in a social studies activity on housing or a school exhibit on clothing. The teacher of speaking and writing should not repeat superficially in her periods with a class those activities which have already been done thoroughly by the same pupils in another class. She should also try, if she is not teaching all the different subjects, to avoid spoiling a center of interest which the social studies teacher is expecting to develop with the same pupils at a later time. The wise program would be to discover what the members of a class are already doing with most enthusiasm and vital interest, and then to help them to carry on the language phases of those activities more effectively. Duplicating activity units in the same field, once for science, again for social studies, later for reading, and perhaps still later for language, results in undesirable overcrowding of the curriculum, unnecessarily superficial understanding of the field studied, and unfortunate lack of integration among the learning outcomes. When pupils decide to study dairy farming, for example, they should gain from their activities growth not only in social studies, but in science, in reading, in speaking, and in writing.

Several modern series of language textbooks have been organized around various types of activities in each grade. For example, the book for a given grade may include a science unit, a social studies unit, a literary unit, a dramatic activity, a construction unit, and so on. The language-arts teacher who permits her class to work through such a unit just as it is presented in the book is not using the text intelligently or effectively. When the authors illustrate in a textbook how McKee's four groups of language items (being courteous, selecting and organizing the things to be said, stating things simply and clearly enough to be understood, and following the commonly accepted standards of correctness in English) may be taught in connection with an activity unit organized around a study of sugar, the teacher should not encourage her pupils to carry through a similar study of sugar, unless they have real interest in and deep curiosity about sugar. If a particular class has already studied sugar, is more interested in tea, salt, or bananas, or cannot obtain the source materials necessary to study sugar, some other center of interest that would provide stronger motivation and richer learning outcomes should certainly be substituted for sugar.

No language textbook can or should ever attempt to prescribe the exact subjects or activities from which the local teacher is to develop a given language habit. A good textbook should, however, illustrate clearly how to gain important language objectives in connection with a wide variety of school and life activities. Teachers should recognize that textbooks in this field are intended to be suggestive and helpful rather than to limit or prescribe their instructional activities.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

1. Writing by Primary Children

Should pupils in the primary grades be required or permitted to write?

It is obvious to any observant teacher that many pupils in the first grade and a few in the second grade are not ready to begin writing even the simplest sentences. The fine co-ordinations of intellectual, nervous, and physical activities required in writing are too much to expect of some primary children. There are, however, even in the first grade a few children who have developed a real readiness for writing and who may properly be encouraged and instructed in writing, at least in the use of large print-script or "manuscript writing" on the blackboard. If any writing is done on paper by a first-grade pupil, it should probably be on large sheets with lines widely separated. Many teachers believe that large pencils should also be supplied in such cases. Requiring all pupils in a first- or second-grade class to practice writing might contribute to the develop-

ment in some pupils of unfortunate nervous disturbances and to a permanent disinclination to write anything.

Most of the pupils in second-grade classes may safely be encouraged to print labels for pictures or exhibits, to prepare brief notes for the bulletin board, and to do other simple writing in large letters. No rule with regard to the beginning of writing instruction can be universally recommended, however, unless it be the rule that individual differences in pupils must always be carefully observed and provided for. The individual pupil's general interest in writing, his motivation for doing a particular writing task, and his current writing skills should always enter into the teacher's decision as to how much stimulation and encouragement she should give him in undertaking writing activities. In writing as in other skills, development may be seriously retarded by requiring practice or by over-emphasizing the development of skills before the individual is physiologically and psychologically ready to develop them.

2. Proofreading and Re-writing

Should pupils be required to correct and to re-write their compositions frequently?

Correcting and re-writing English compositions, although a helpful experience when strongly motivated, may sometimes be carried on in a manner that produces more adverse effects on the student's interest in writing and tendencies to write than beneficial effects upon correctness in his language usage or clearness in expression or meaning. Proofreading and re-writing, like all other instructional practices, should be engaged in for their contributions to all of the four large groups of language outcomes listed by McKee on page 13. What is done in language classes should contribute as much as possible to the student's judgment as to when he should write, what ideas it would be courteous and interesting to express to the reader, how these ideas should be organized, and how they should be expressed in order to be readily and exactly understood, as well as to his skill in using language in accordance with the standards of correctness generally accepted among cultured persons.

As indicated by Mrs. Falk in her discussion of handwriting as a tool that facilitates expression (pp. 161-62), the teacher "should recognize that the child, like most adults, produces on different occasions various levels" of writing. "Rough drafts, because of their impermanence, the expectation of making changes later when proofreading, and perhaps because of haste in writing, are frequently and quite reasonably less legible than the revised final forms of the paper." Mrs. Falk might very properly have added, "less well organized, less clearly stated, less interestingly and courteously phrased, and less nearly correct in grammar and syntax."

Even the professional author finds it necessary to proofread what he has written and to make changes that will contribute to the particular effects he desires to produce in his readers. An elementary-school child, having had relatively little experience in selecting and organizing ideas, in stating them simply and clearly, in thinking about the effects they are likely to produce on the reader, in observing the conventions of correct English, and in the mechanics of writing legibly, should rarely be expected to produce a first draft that would serve even a relatively simple purpose. Attempts to require a child to observe all the different writing standards in a first draft are likely to create a strong distaste for all written expression. From their earliest experiences in dictating for the teacher to write on the blackboard simple accounts of what they have recently done or seen, children should be taught to proofread and re-write materials that are to be read by others or preserved for later reference.

Reality of purpose in writing is essential to efficiency in learning to improve one's writing habits. Unless the writer has a particular reader in mind, it is difficult, if not impossible, to judge whether the language used is sufficiently simple and clear to be readily understood. Unless one has in mind a definite effect to be produced upon a recognized reader or readers, it is hard to determine whether the ideas expressed are the ones that should have been selected for expression, whether they are organized in the most effective way, and whether one has been as courteous and formal in his expression of them as he should have been.

The child who is required by his teacher to write a composition of a certain number of lines or words on a given topic is not likely to have in his mind any vital purpose or effect to be accomplished on any specific reader, other than perhaps to supply the teacher with the required number of lines or words. An exercise of this sort is usually quite sterile, so far as improvement of important habits of written expression is concerned, for the student has no real basis for setting himself any vital standards either in preparing his first draft or in proofreading and re-writing it. Without definite readers to be influenced in definite directions, the pupil finds it necessary to think primarily in terms of receiving on his paper as few red marks from the teacher as possible, and the teacher usually makes those red marks on the pupil's paper chiefly at the points where errors of correct usage and syntax have been made. The other three important groups of language habits which should also be developed are rarely emphasized by those teachers of composition who make such lifeless assignments.

The habit of depending on the teacher to indicate where one's written expressions might be improved is decidedly unwholesome. The student should be encouraged to depend upon himself, both in finding his own

weaknesses and in correcting them. He should learn to examine what he has written to see whether he has chosen the most important ideas for expression, whether he has organized them in the most effective way, whether he has stated them sufficiently simply and clearly, and whether he has been as thoughtful of and as courteous to his readers as he should be. Illegibility in handwriting, misspelling of words, faulty punctuation, incorrect usage of words, and errors in syntax are discourteous to one's readers. Furthermore, they have serious consequences to one's message, primarily because they slow up the reader's comprehension of what the writer is trying to say. Such defects distract the reader's attention from the message itself and center it upon the incorrect forms used to convey the ideas. If one's message is really important, it deserves to be clothed in forms that will not attract attention to themselves, but will make exactly the desired impression on one's readers.

Where a student has nothing in particular that he wants to write and no particular readers to whom he wishes to write, the tendency to develop desirable habits of proofreading and re-writing what he has written is not likely to become strong. If one writes merely to satisfy the requirements of a teacher, he does not develop habits of setting standards for himself or of applying standards to his own writing. By writing to meet a teacher's requirements only, one learns only to write to meet that teacher's requirements. Unless the writing one does is for real purposes and to real people, one does not acquire a strong sense of personal responsibility for thinking about one's writing, for proofreading and evaluating it in terms of appropriate standards, or for re-writing it in terms of his own purposes. In this connection the statements of McKee on pages 34-35 are worth of being repeated:

If he does not do this thinking and changing or re-writing, the chances are good that his first draft will have supplied him with harmful practice in writing poorly. It is by this correcting, improving, and changing or re-writing that the pupil learns to write well. He learns to write well, not so much by writing first drafts about many different topics as by the right sort of proofreading and re-writing of what he has written.

3. Correction of Errors in Oral Expression

Should the teacher interrupt a child's statement to correct errors in his speech?

The correct answer to this question is the same as that to many other instructional problems: "It depends upon the child and the circumstances." Some children are extremely self-conscious and would be deeply chagrined to have anyone correct their pronunciation or choice of words in public, while other children are so self-confident that no inter-

ruption is likely to disturb them. A relatively timid child may, however, on a certain day be so interested in the oral account he is giving the class of some dramatic event he has witnessed that the teacher need not hesitate to correct a speech error immediately, although under ordinary circumstances she would merely make a note of the error and speak to the child privately about it. The criterion to be applied in deciding whether to make a correction immediately has to do with the probable effect of a correctional interruption upon the child's total development, not only in speech, but in interest, social attitudes, and personality traits as well. If an interruption of a particular child at a given moment is likely to disturb the child emotionally, it should probably not be made.

Improvement in speech habits depends in large measure upon the strength of the child's desire to improve and upon his development of thoughtful habits of observing and attempting to improve his own oral language. Dependence upon corrections by the teacher is as undesirable in oral as in written expression. The child should be taught to ask himself the same searching questions regarding his oral reports and recitations as he asks regarding his written work: "Did I select the most important things to say? Did I give them in the order that would probably be most effective in gaining the result I want? Were my statements simple and clear enough to be understood by my audience? Was I courteous and polite to my audience? Were the words and sentences I used correct?" Those schools which possess facilities for the recording of speech have opportunities for helping pupils to develop effective habits of self-analysis and self-correction which are invaluable.

With the guidance and help of the teacher each pupil should keep a list of his own weaknesses in oral expression and should work systematically upon them. In such matters as pronunciation and usage, items from an individual student's list may well be selected and used by him as drill material. Where two or more pupils have identical errors to correct, they may be grouped together temporarily for mutual help and drill. If it can be arranged, all drill upon oral errors should be conducted in normal tones rather than in whispers. Furthermore, as much of the drill as possible should involve speaking in sentences, asking and answering questions that include the particular expression on which drill is needed, rather than merely repeating the expression in useless isolation.

4. Drill in Language

How much and what kinds of drill should be used in teaching language?

The teacher's real problem here is how to be sure that each child obtains enough drill of the sort he individually needs. Requiring a child to take a drill exercise for which he is not yet ready uses up his time and

fails to produce the desirable learning outcomes which that time might have yielded. Requiring him to engage in routine practice of a habit which he has already acquired and always uses effectively is a similar waste of the pupil's time and may develop in him a feeling of distaste for the teacher and for the subject she is attempting to teach. But drill in a language habit which the pupil really wants to acquire and for the use of which he is otherwise ready should be provided as generously and intelligently as possible.

Mere repetition of a language form in isolation from its use is not likely to build the habit of using that form correctly. Repetition does establish habits when it is promptly followed by feelings of satisfaction growing out of the accomplishment of one's vital purposes. A fifth-grade pupil, for example, might actually re-write the word *potatoes* twenty times in a spelling drill without learning to spell it correctly in later social and business letters. If the same pupil is making up for the grocer a list of the foods his gang wants to buy for a picnic, however, the need for knowing how to spell *potatoes* may become sufficiently personal and vital that only one or two repetitions will be required to fix the correct spelling in his mind.

In order to know whether a certain pupil is ready for drill on the spelling of a certain word, the pronunciation of a given name, a particular use of the comma, or the writing of a specific letter of the alphabet, the teacher must be thoroughly acquainted with the pupil, his background experiences, his interests, personal attitudes, and specific abilities. The assignment of exactly the same drill material to all the members of a group, without knowing that each of them sees the practical value of learning the habit and is otherwise ready to feel satisfaction when the habit develops, is inefficient instruction and may in some children produce harmful results. Unless the student understands the value and use of the acts he is repeating in a drill, he may feel no more satisfaction or relief when he performs them correctly than when he does them incorrectly. Unless a correct performance gives him greater satisfaction than an incorrect performance, the correct habit will not be strengthened by a drill exercise.

In order that the pupil may be able to feel the satisfaction that accompanies the making of progress toward desired goals, drill materials should be of such a nature as will enable him to know immediately whether he is actually improving. Blind repetition or drill may actually result in more practice of an incorrect or undesirable type of performance than of the desirable one. Teachers should be careful in the provision of drill and practice materials to be certain that the child is able to apply the necessary standards and to judge correctly his own progress or lack of it.

Drill or practice in language, in order to be most fruitful, should in-

clude the actual use of the habit in a practical social situation. As was indicated in a previous section of this chapter, for example, drill upon a given speech habit should be conducted in a normal speaking tone rather than in a whisper, and should involve speaking in sentences in a real conversation in order to establish the desired habit as a useful social tool rather than as a mere language-classroom exercise. The stronger its motivation in the child's feeling of personal need, and the nearer the drill situation is to the type of life situation in which the habit is to be used, the greater the beneficial effects a drill exercise may be expected to produce.

5. Exposure to Incorrect Forms

Is it desirable to present incorrect forms to a pupil, either in discussion or in drill materials?

This issue arises because there is evidence that children from homes in which only the best English is spoken sometimes adopt incorrect expressions that appear in tests, drill materials, or textbooks in language. For example, a boy may never have heard or used such an expression as "I have went home," or "Mary has went to school," until it appears in his third-grade language class as something to be avoided. As soon as he uses the expression at home or at school, the language class may be blamed for spoiling his language habits. In all such cases, the parent or teacher should make a careful study of the personal factors behind the use of the incorrect expression before deciding that a pupil should never be exposed to an incorrect form.

In the example just given there is the possibility that the boy found the expression "have went" so absurd and unnatural as to be funny, and that he began to use it as a device for bringing smiles to the faces of his friends. There is also the possibility that he has been sensitive to the differences between his own correct language and the less correct expressions of his playmates, and that he adopted the expression "have went" because it was labeled as an authentic error, in the hope that through its use he might appear to be more nearly like the fellows with whom he wants to be friendly. Unless the teacher or parent understands fully the innermost feelings and motives of the child, it is easy to misinterpret his external behavior and speech. There remains the possibility, of course, that an incorrect expression adopted because it "sounded funny," because it might help him to be accepted by a certain gang, or because it would be annoying to an unpopular teacher, may be used so often and with such satisfying results that it will become habitual. The important steps for the teacher are to make certain that the child knows that the expression is not approved by cultured persons, to discover just why he has

adopted it, and then to arrange matters so that the use of the correct form will give him greater satisfaction than the use of the incorrect form.

Unless a child actually uses an incorrect pronunciation or expression, there is no great value in pointing out to him that it is incorrect. When an incorrect form is presented to him, however, it should be clearly labeled as incorrect. On this point it is appropriate to quote from the report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Experiments have shown that where the correct and incorrect forms are presented side by side in illustrations or models, clearly labeled "right" and "wrong," and with the critical words italicized or underlined in such a way as to make them stand out and hence come sharply to the focus of attention, the results show better learning than where merely the correct forms are presented with particular emphasis on the word or phrase whose usage is being corrected.¹

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL STANDARDS

*Should norms of development in language be established by grade or by age?*²

Children at birth vary in weight, in size, and in aptitude for learning to speak and write English. They also vary in the rapidity with which they will develop in each of these and in other characteristics. By the time they are six years old these children will average about twenty kilograms in weight, and each will have acquired approximately two of his permanent teeth. Many of them, however, especially among the boys, will not yet have acquired any of their permanent teeth, while a few will be able to show a half dozen or more.

The rates at which children develop are affected by many different factors, some of which can be controlled only slightly or not at all by parents and teachers. It is important, however, that we have available the facts as to how much the average child weighs at any given age, and the extent to which this average weight is usually affected by such factors as sex, race, nutrition, and exercise. The weight of a particular child may then be compared with the average weight for children of the same age, sex, and race, not with the idea of making him conform exactly with the average, but for the purpose of determining the extent to which he differs from the norm or average. If the difference between the individual and the average for his group is very small, little further consideration is likely to be given the matter. If the child is far above or far below the average, however, additional study of his condition should certainly be made.

¹ National Council of Teachers of English, *An Experience Curriculum in English*, p. 244. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1935.

² For more adequate discussions of this issue, see chapters iv and ix of this yearbook.

Norms or averages of performance in language expression have general values comparable to those in height, weight, number of teeth, strength of the back, and circumference of the chest. A child whose scores on a spelling test are almost exactly average for his age, grade, and race is not on that account dismissed from all further study of spelling, but he is likely to be omitted at least temporarily from the list of pupils for whom the teacher is seeking special data for the diagnosis of individual spelling disabilities. A child whose scores are far below the average for children of his age, grade, and race should, however, be given further careful study. Investigation may reveal that his parents and grandparents stopped going to school very early in life, that there are practically no books in his home, and that few letters or written communications are sent or received. This pupil who is so far below the class average in his spelling scores may actually be doing relatively better in spelling, considering his nonacademic inheritance and limited home background, than the other student whose scores are almost exactly average, but who may be the son of a college professor of English composition.

For the purpose of having definite information as to what specific outcomes of language instruction may be expected at various age and grade levels, reliable data should be collected and tabulated with regard to student achievements in all those lines of language development considered desirable. Measuring and establishing average scores in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and other items from the "correct form" group has so far been more popular (probably because it was easier to do) than making measurements and determining average achievements in such matters as the selection and organization of ideas to be expressed, expressing ideas sufficiently clearly to be readily understood, and observing the rules of courtesy. At least a part of the overemphasis that has been given by teachers to items of formal correctness in expression has undoubtedly developed because it has been possible for some years to measure a few of these items of correct form by means of "standard tests" and to compare the results with state or national grade averages. Teachers as well as pupils tend to work on the skills or habits on which they think they may later be tested or judged. Measures of achievement and average scores by age and grade should be developed as rapidly as possible in those other phases of language development which have heretofore been relatively neglected fields. The task of developing these new tests and establishing norms or averages in terms of them is one in which classroom teachers of language should co-operate gladly with competent leaders in educational research.

A previous yearbook of this society,³ prepared twenty years ago by Dean Earl Hudelson of the University of West Virginia, gave an excellent account of the studies of achievement in written composition that had been made previous to that time and added some of the most significant original data ever published with regard to the effects of varying types of assignments upon the general quality of the compositions written by young people. Hudelson also presented in that yearbook an improved scale for measuring the general quality of written compositions and a standardized procedure for securing compositions to be rated on the composition scale. Little further research has since been done in this field. While scales for measuring the general quality of English compositions, such as that developed by Hillegas and improved by Hudelson, are not sufficiently diagnostic to be used regularly by classroom teachers, they do have value for instructional supervisors and educational research workers. Now that voice recording instruments are available, scales for measuring important characteristics in oral composition should be constructed, and careful studies should be made for determining the factors which promote or retard development in oral expression.

It is practically impossible and educationally undesirable to set any minimum level of achievement in language and require all pupils in a given grade or of a given age to reach that standard, just as it would be impossible to set any given height or weight as a minimum for all children of a given age or grade. A parent should know what regimen of food and exercise a child needs in order to grow normally and should compare the child's measurements with the appropriate norms periodically, but no mere "requirement" can make a child heavier or taller or more fluent in writing and speaking. A teacher of the language arts must have clearly in mind the habits that are essential in speaking and writing effectively, the sequential order in which these habits normally develop, and the types of experience by which growth in each of these habits is normally promoted. She can then study each pupil to discover just which of the desirable language habits he has acquired, stimulate and guide him in those instructional experiences that will help him to develop the additional habits that he needs to acquire next, and thus assist him in making as much progress as is possible for him in the direction of effective expression in English.

To set up "minimum essentials" by grades or ages, and then refuse to let a particular child move ahead because he is already below standard in

³ *English Composition: Its Aims, Methods, and Measurement*. Twenty-second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education (5835 Kimbark Avenue), 1921.

the language achievements characteristic of other children of that age or grade, is as absurd as it would be to stop feeding a child because he was already below standard size. The language teacher's objective for a given child, regardless of the grade or group to which he belongs, should be the development of that child's oral and written language habits as rapidly and as far as it is possible to develop them without neglect of other important lines of development. Each child must be developed in desirable directions from his actual present status rather than from the status which one "ought to have" at his age or grade.

As has been observed previously, the standardized scales and tests so far available for measuring achievement in language are applicable to written language only and chiefly to matters of correct written form. The diagnosis which must be made of each pupil's language status in order for the teacher to be able to provide him with the instructive experiences he should have next must include his interests, ambitions, and social attitudes as well as his language abilities, must include oral as well as written language, and must deal with items that are concerned with the selection and organization of ideas to be expressed, with expression of these ideas in language that is clear and easily understood by one's audience or readers, and with courtesies that facilitate the reception and acceptance of what one is saying, as well as with technical correctness in the expressions used. In order to arrive at such a diagnosis the teacher should observe the child's behavior and language on the playground, on the street, and in the home, as well as in the classroom. True-false and multiple-choice classroom tests cannot be fully adequate for making an instructional diagnosis. Conversations, discussions, recitations, discursive examinations, friendly letters, play activities, and every possible social activity of the child should be studied for evidences of his status, needs, and capacities in oral and written expression.

The successive language goals toward which a child is being developed should exist in the consciousness of the child himself as well as in the mind of the teacher. He will probably not be able to see as far ahead as the teacher, but unless the child is conscious of the standard of expression toward which he is working he can feel little satisfaction when he reaches or approaches that standard, and he will therefore develop little more tendency to repeat a desirable than an undesirable expression. The teacher's purpose is to develop desirable language habits that will operate effectively in life outside the particular room in which she gives instruction and maintains standards. The child's growth in consciousness of desirable standards in oral and written expression and in sincere desire to achieve these standards must be a primary concern and responsibility of each teacher of the language arts.

CHAPTER XI

INTERPRETATION OF THE LANGUAGE-ARTS PROGRAM TO PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

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I. NEED FOR A PROGRAM OF INTERPRETATION

Critical comments about the teaching of English are frequently heard in social or business groups. Often the speaker is ready too with a sure remedy. It may be a technique long ago found ineffective or one which is obviously not practical. The frequency and nature of such casual comments and the agreement they provoke among the listeners are startling evidences of the failure of the schools to interpret to the public their aims, the practical problems involved in securing desired outcomes, and pertinent facts about their results.

Articles in lay magazines reveal at times lack of understanding on the part of the writers, if not deliberate intention to distort the picture. Two of the most critical articles¹ have had wide circulation. One article by a school board member and another by a teacher carry prestige with their readers because of the reasonable assumption that the authors are in a position to know whereof they speak. Another article,² also by a teacher, reiterates the usual criticisms and offers a defense that is totally inadequate.

An individual teacher in a school system feels overwhelmed by the barrage of criticism. There is opportunity only occasionally for response. Usually the situation is not right for frank discussion. The number of persons who could be influenced by even the most fluent and professionally minded teacher is so small that the effort to clarify the situation seems scarcely worth while. Good teachers of language would welcome a planned program of interpretation which would help to create under-

¹ Margaret Weymouth Jackson, "Has Your School Gone Fancy?" *Country Gentleman*, CX (December, 1940), 7-8, 54.

Ann L. Crockett, "Lollipops vs. Learning," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXII (March 16, 1940), 29, 105-6.

² Adeline Courtney Bartlett, "They Write Worse and Worse," *Harper's Magazine*, CLXXXI (June, 1940), 40-45.

standing. At present, they feel that they are continually on the defensive against uninformed and unsympathetic critics. They would like to raise the discussion of language teaching to a more professional level.

II. WHY INTERPRETATION IS DESIRABLE

The principal need for a program of interpretation grows out of the broadened purposes and changed standards of value in the teaching of language in a modern school. The majority of adults in our population received their language training through the study, and often the memorization, of a textbook that began in this way: "A sentence is the expression of a complete thought in words." That they did not expect such training to bear any relation to their use of language as a tool is demonstrated in such studies as *The Place of English in American Life*.

An astonishing revelation of many of the questionnaires, more often perhaps from those who have attended college than from those whose formal schooling ended earlier, is the lack of realization of any correlation between the rules of usage, or the principles and devices of rhetorical art, and the conditions and exigencies of human intercourse. . . . That is to say, such persons have no clear conception of language as a tool.³

There is no doubt that parents and other adults in the community could be easily convinced of the need for such objectives as are set forth in chapter ii. They may question the ability of the school to achieve the results desired and, because of their own formal language training, they are likely to be critical of the methods by which the modern school attempts to reach its goals.

Teachers, however, have no right to feel either surprised or superior when they find that parents do not understand current practice. Teaching is a professional skill. One would hardly expect a layman, unfamiliar with research, educational books, and magazines, probably completely out of touch with schools except through the experiences of his child or the work of graduates of the school in his employ, to have any adequate conception of what goes on in the modern classroom. If they were given an explanation of the purposes of the language program and some evidence of results, most parents would probably be glad to leave to the school the determination of techniques to be used.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to give tangible evidence of results. In any period when objectives are changing, some of the old

³ John Mantle Clapp, *The Place of English in American Life*, p. 44. Report of an investigation by a Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English (211 West Sixty-eighth Street), 1926.

values are lost before new ones have yet been gained. Then too, no other nation has ever assumed, as has the United States, the responsibility of teaching everyone to speak and write with reasonable ease, correctness, and satisfaction to himself. Those adults who in their thinking have glamorized the results in the schools of the last generation often forget the rigid selection which transferred from school to manual labor and comparative inarticulateness large numbers of children at the end of the fourth or fifth grade. Even with that advantage, there is evidence that results were not all that some persons fondly dreamed and now remember.

The report of Philip H. Falk, Superintendent of Schools of Madison, Wisconsin, for the school year 1939-40 contains quotations from the report of the Superintendent in 1900:

A criticism with which we are all familiar, and which usually goes unchallenged, is that our schools fail to make good spellers. It is undeniably true that there is a great deal of bad spelling in our schools, and that methods of teaching in this line may be greatly improved. Poor spelling, however, is not a weakness that is confined to the present generation. . . . Letters and notes from parents lead one to doubt seriously the efficiency of the methods of teaching spelling in the past.

The teaching of English in the public schools is subject to much criticism. . . . We must confess, on the whole, that the use of English is not taught as well as may be desired. . . . Much of the criticism in this line comes from young instructors and inexperienced assistants in higher institutions of learning who fail utterly to appreciate the difficulties under which the elementary and secondary schools are laboring.⁴

The present superintendent concludes, after his perusal of the records of forty years ago, that the "golden age before the days of frills, democracy, and progressiveness in education when schools maintained high standards in fundamentals is apparently just another fiction of a glorified but none-too-glorious past."

The school would do well to be entirely honest in its discussions with parents and to admit that it cannot with all pupils show the results desired. Realizing that the purposes of the program cannot be achieved by the school alone, teachers must seek the co-operation of the home and community.

An effective program of interpretation is necessary for a second reason. To certain of the goals of an adequate language program the home and the community make a major contribution. Even before the child enters school his attitudes toward other persons have been well established. He

⁴ *Democracy: The Worth of the Individual*, pp. 30-31. Eighty-fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools. Madison, Wisconsin: Board of Education, 1941.

may be open, spontaneous, and courteous to others; he may be repressed, sullen, and argumentative; or he may be an aggressive exhibitionist. Such attitudes will affect his language. Also, the child's own sense of security and self-confidence is largely the result of his home conditions and treatment. Timidity and fear are frequent causes of inarticulateness, of poor thought organization, and even of usage errors. Listening habits are built at home and in other social situations outside of school. Patterns of behavior in using the telephone, in conversation, in handling a disagreement, in making contacts with strangers are built largely by the home. A child's pride in good writing and in correct spelling often reflects the parents' belief in the importance of such skills. The cultural pattern of a community's language may aid or nullify the efforts of the school to establish good language habits. Enlisting the assistance of parents in the community will help to reduce the difficulties the school experiences in eradicating poor language which the child may be hearing continually in his out-of-school contacts. As one reads the objectives in chapter ii, one must wonder how any teacher could hope to achieve the desired results without enlisting the understanding and active support of parents.

A third and perhaps most important reason for a planned program of parent co-operation is the sense of security thereby provided for the child. When the adults most concerned with his growth have common standards of achievement for him, have respect for each other's procedures and opinions, provide situations in which they expect similar language attitudes and skills, and commend the same types of performance, the child's sense of security is strengthened. Many a child has had to defend to his parents his teacher's interest in his writing of poetry or to justify the time spent by his class in taking a trip to the post office or to some other source of interest and direct learning in the community. Sometimes a child is required to relay to the school his parents' criticism of some teaching technique. One child may do it hesitantly and regretfully, while another may bring such comments gleefully with an inflated sense of superiority. Either attitude is harmful to the child's development and disturbing to school and home friendliness. Most of such conflicts for the child could be avoided if parents and teachers dealt directly with each other in a spirit of friendliness and mutual desire for the best interests of the child. A program of interpretation of the language arts and a plan by which parents and other adults in the community may bring their suggestions to the school will anticipate areas of misunderstanding and avoid many conflicts between individual teachers and parents.

It might be added that a program of interpretation to the public may give to the staff of the school needed convictions with regard to their common purposes, more definite knowledge of procedures in grades other

than their own, and more facility in discussing and explaining their work. As they work out together the content of bulletins and programs, they clarify their thinking and beliefs with regard to their work and gain increased respect for each other.

III. PRINCIPLES OF A PROGRAM OF INTERPRETATION

Before suggesting specific techniques, it may be well to state a few general principles for a program of interpretation of the language arts to parents and community. While these are in accord with the principles for a public relations program as developed by persons working in the general field of school public relations, they have been confined to the problem of interpreting the language arts in particular.

a) *The language-arts publicity should be planned as an integral part of the total school public relations program.* The competition sometimes found among teachers of different fields for increased time, equipment, and popularity tends to decrease public confidence in the school. Without realizing it the teacher who voices a personal criticism of another department or of another teacher of his own subject is undermining the reputation of the school. In the mind of the public every teacher speaks officially when he talks about education. A planned program may do much to prevent damage from such sources of misunderstanding. The committee or individual concerned with general school publicity should consult representatives of the language-arts field and work with them in planning programs of interpretation.

b) *The program of interpretation should be interesting, perhaps even emotional, enough to stimulate not only acceptance but enthusiasm on the part of parents and other laymen.* Controversial issues, like the function of grammar study in the improvement of speech, will draw an interested audience for a discussion. Reviews and dramatizations of books and current motion pictures make appealing radio programs that demonstrate the pupils' command of oral language.

c) *The program should be continuous but flexible and varied from year to year.* The flexibility may be achieved by directing the material at times to specific publics⁵—employers, parents, professional groups, civic organizations, teachers of other fields and grade levels.

Everyone tends to generalize on the basis of his own experience. Recently the secretary of a professional society advertised anonymously for a stenographer. He failed to consult teachers who might recommend

⁵ For comments on various publics see *Teacher and Public*, pp. 216-20. Eighth Yearbook of the Department of Classroom Teachers. Washington: National Education Association, 1934.

efficient typists. Although the position was to pay only fifteen dollars a week, and although he used a blind advertisement for securing applications, this employer expected near perfection in the letters of all applicants. After receiving about three hundred letters from applicants, he summarized in petty detail the errors in those letters and sent to the local superintendent of schools a scathing criticism of the public school's teaching of English.

Teachers should be included among the specific publics to be considered. Much of the school's worst publicity comes from teachers themselves because they do not understand or approve of practices in other grades or departments. A group of mothers appeared in a school office as a committee to insist that spelling was not adequately taught in the elementary schools. They brought with them as evidence a list of misspelled words from pupils' themes. The list had been prepared for them by a high-school teacher.

There must be variety if the interest of the public is to be sustained year after year. Many people in the community have no children in the elementary schools. To them the program of instruction in elementary language is remote and rather dull unless their attention can be captured by interesting, colorful publicity. A display in a store window of old and new textbooks attracted attention and comments in one community during Education Week. Teachers of elementary language might occasionally arrange such a display. Boldly printed posters might be used to emphasize the goals of a modern program in contrast to those of older texts. Book reviews written by a children's book committee may be published in the local newspapers. Results of surveys of the radio-listening of children will find interested readers.

In many communities studies have been made of children's errors in language usage. A radio program might be built around the results of such studies. Parents and other adults would be interested to learn the errors that are most commonly made and the methods by which the schools are attempting to correct poor language habits. A service club or other community group might be persuaded to have its members take some standard test in capitalization or sentence structure as a preliminary to a discussion of the use of tests as means of determining individual needs for instruction.

d) *The school should present facts, evidence, and demonstrable results whenever possible.* According to Farley⁶ school patrons are more inter-

⁶ Belmont M. Farley, *What To Tell the People about the Schools*, pp. 16, 49. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

ested in pupil progress and achievement than in any other type of school information or news. Comparisons of pupils' reading test scores with scores made by adults or by pupils of ten or twenty years ago make interesting news items. So much of our achievement in English is intangible that teachers would do well to search out techniques of measurement which could be presented as evidence of pupil progress.

e) *The publicity should be absolutely honest.* False claims about results or the telling of only part of the facts will discredit the school and destroy confidence. Presentation of the difficulties involved may modify a patron's critical attitude toward unsatisfactory results. A speaker who was asked to talk to a parent group, belligerent about spelling techniques and results, began his talk by asking the parents to take a test on ten common but confusing words. When they marked their own papers and found no score above 70 per cent they were in a humorous but chastened mood to hear about the difficulties of learning to spell. The speaker then called attention to the number of different pronunciations for the letters *ough* and the number of different spellings for the first syllables of *circus*, *surface*, *certain*, *service*, and *sir*. Those who had been sure that the solution was simply to "teach more phonics" began to understand and sympathize when the speaker said that "one of the hardest problems in teaching spelling is to overcome a child's habit of spelling all words as they sound."

f) *The school should use many means of communication, including radio, newspapers, pupil contact, home visits, invitations to patrons to attend school, bulletins, talks, and articles in lay magazines.* Most school publicity programs reach only parents, and far too few of them. Many other citizens, because they support the schools and work with the products of the schools, are justifiably concerned about instruction.

g) *The program of interpretation should be a two-way program.* It should provide for interchange of opinion between teachers and patrons, not merely provide a scheme for radiating information and direction from the school. Some effective plan should be devised so that the school may benefit by the suggestions of patrons.

h) *Teachers may themselves bring to the school the support and approval of patrons by exemplifying their own standards in English.* Teachers who claim to be preparing children to conduct a meeting, act as secretary, make a talk, participate in discussion, write letters, meet people graciously, and handle arguments with courtesy should themselves be competent in all such situations. They should participate in community affairs and exemplify their own standards in their relations with the public.

General standards for a school public relations program are given by

Reeder⁷ and in the Fifteenth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence.⁸ Teachers should become acquainted with the work of the School Public Relations Association⁹ and with the materials presented in their newsletters.

IV. TECHNIQUES FOR A PROGRAM OF INTERPRETATION

There is no program of interpretation so effective in securing community support as the comments of parents who are pleased with the progress made by their children and satisfied with their achievements. Every child, no matter how little he may seem to achieve at school, has a circle of friends and relatives who are eager that he develop and who are potentially the best publicists that the school can have. All other techniques that may be suggested are unimportant when compared with the resolve of the school to achieve for every child his greatest possible development in language.

Not only school children and their parents but teachers too, whether they realize it or not, are the source of much publicity, both favorable and unfavorable, for the schools in which they teach. The competition between speech and English teachers, the criticism of English departments by other departments, or the discrediting of teachers of one grade by teachers of another grade may be the cause of lay criticism. As a preliminary to a program of public interpretation it is desirable to create unity and mutual support for the language program among members of the school staff. Discussion meetings, frequent visitation among teachers of different fields and grades, and curriculum study by committees of teachers may help to realize this objective.

It is comparatively easy in most communities to enlist the interest of many parents of children in the lower grades. Mothers visit schools frequently and discuss problems freely with the teachers of the primary grades. In such intimate conferences parents will learn of the school's aims in language and will ask how they may contribute to the children's development.

In the upper grades fewer direct contacts make necessary the use of demonstrations and exhibits of children's work that will draw parents

⁷ Ward G. Reeder, *An Introduction to Public-School Relations*, pp. 8-12. New York: Macmillan Co., 1940.

⁸ *The Improvement of Education: Its Interpretation for Democracy*, pp. 171-75. Fifteenth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. Washington: National Education Association, 1937.

⁹ Otis A. Crosby, President, 1354 Broadway, Detroit, Michigan.

into the school and of bulletins or other informative material such as handbooks for parents. The spelling bulletin that follows was prepared for distribution to parents of pupils in the second grade. It indicates the possibilities of using bulletins in any or all of the language arts to secure parent understanding and assistance.

A Message to Parents

This year your child is using his first spelling book. He will learn about three hundred of the words that children use most often in their writing. He will also learn many more words because he needs and wants to write them. In fact, although he did not study spelling in the first grade, he learned to spell many words as he wrote them in his everyday work, his messages to you, and the letters which he wrote at school.

You can do much to help your child to be a good speller.

1. Make him feel that correct spelling is important. He will appreciate your pride in his learning to spell.
2. Get acquainted with the way in which the school teaches spelling and watch your child's progress.
3. Encourage him to write little messages to you on a handy pad and to write thank-you notes to grandmother and others.
4. If your child asks you to spell a word for him, write the word. Do not merely spell it orally.
5. Teach him to pronounce his words clearly. The child who says *dere* for *there*, or *warsh* for *wash* will have trouble in spelling those words.
6. Teach him that not *all words* are spelled as they sound. Many of them are, but some words are spelled alike and are sounded differently (*hear* and *bear*); while others are spelled differently but are sounded alike (*do*, *shoe*, *few*, *too*).
7. Do not expect him to spell correctly every word that he may want to write.
8. A young child can learn to spell only a few words each week, but he knows a much larger number of words to use. Be patient with his occasional misspelling, and encourage him to ask for help when he is not certain of a word.
9. Keep a spelling notebook at home in which you write the words he asks to have spelled. He can learn to use it as you use a dictionary.
10. If your child shows dislike or fear of spelling, discuss his attitude with the teacher. The most important single help in learning to spell is the desire to spell correctly.

Topics for such bulletins may be determined by asking teachers to list questions that parents have raised with regard to language instruction. Typical are: "Why do you teach manuscript writing in the primary grades?" "How will children learn what is right if you don't correct their papers in red ink?" "When and how do you teach children to use a dictionary?" Bulletins may be prepared by committees of teachers.

They need not be distributed generally but may be kept in reserve to be given to parents who inquire about such problems. They will be more convincing than a casual, hastily phrased explanation by an individual teacher.

Co-operative studies by parents and teachers, or surveys of parents' wishes with regard to school, are means of increasing understanding. One study of parents' opinions as expressed in letters and in interviews is reported by Jean M. Currie.¹⁰ A study of children's letter-writing habits and needs was made with the assistance of parents in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin.¹¹ Possible language situations that may be made the basis of such studies are (1) problems in the use of the telephone at home, (2) radio listening tastes and habits, (3) leisure-time interests and hobbies to which language programs may contribute.

Personal contacts between teachers and parents are highly desirable at any grade level. There is no better way to secure co-operative effort on the child's special problems. Parents respond to suggestions for overcoming excessive timidity in a child's manner or for dealing with the argumentative or too aggressive child. They want their children to be socially acceptable and competent in conversation and in all language situations. Even high-school pupils have been found to benefit from home-school co-operation.¹²

Newspaper articles, particularly those accompanied by good photographs, movies, slides, posters, charts, graphs, and pictographs may all be used in a program of school interpretation. Some school systems maintain a speakers' bureau with competent teachers available to give talks at luncheon clubs, women's clubs, and study groups of various kinds. Announcements of the speakers' bureau, including topics of the talks, are sent to the presidents of all local organizations early in the fall. Arrangements for the speakers are made through a committee of teachers.

If possible, newspaper articles should be prepared by someone trained in journalism. Knowledge of the kind of news that the papers are glad to

¹⁰ Jean M. Currie, "What We Think the Schools Should Do," *Childhood Education*, XVIII (November, 1941), 110-14.

¹¹ Reported in *Family Living and Our Schools*, pp. 134-36. Joint Committee of the Home Economics Department of the National Education Association and the Society for Curriculum Study. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941. Also reported by Ethel Mabie Falk, "Letters to Enrich Children's Experience," *Elementary English Review*, XVIII (March, 1941), 77-82.

¹² Lyndword N. L. Smart, "Improvement in Classroom Performance through Home Visitation." Unpublished Master's thesis, Clark University, 1940. (Abstract in *Clark University Abstracts of Dissertations and Theses*, Vol. XII, pp. 130-32.)

print will eliminate waste effort in the preparation of releases that may not be used.

Most local radio stations will give time to interesting broadcasts. Discussions in which parents and teachers participate are more popular than programs in which children take part. The script should be prepared ahead of time and carefully rehearsed. It is only the exceptional and experienced commentator who can risk approaching the microphone without a paper.

There is a definite need for teachers who are enthusiastic about their work and who possess the capacity to write well to make contributions to lay magazines. Few persons, other than teachers, read professional educational journals. The layman secures his impression of the attitudes of the profession from an occasional article which appears in a popular magazine. Unfortunately, the one whose article gets the space may be the teacher with a martyr complex, who complains about the community's treatment of him, or the one who is on the defensive about his achievements and who appeals for sympathy because he is too busy to do anything well, or the sentimental teacher who discusses his work and his results in a glow that is unconvincing and even distasteful to straight-thinking laymen who know what they want from the schools.

A highly successful technique for securing the interchange of opinion and knowledge between school and community is most difficult to devise. During the school year 1942-43 the public relations committee of the Wisconsin Education Association sponsored local community forums on educational problems. Supt. Russell E. Lewis of Waukesha, Wisconsin, arranged a number of these discussion meetings. Laymen predominated among the members of the panel, and topics were chosen at the suggestion of parents or other citizens. Fortunate is the school system that can make citizens feel that their experience and suggestions are being welcomed and used.

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CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION

(As Revised at the 1924 Meeting and Amended in 1926,
1928, 1929, 1932, and 1933)

ARTICLE I

Name. The name of this Society shall be "The National Society for the Study of Education."

ARTICLE II

Object. Its purposes are to carry on the investigation of educational problems, to publish the results, and to promote their discussion.

ARTICLE III

Membership. Section 1. There shall be two classes of members—active and honorary.

Section 2. Any person who is desirous of promoting the purposes of this Society is eligible to active membership and shall become such on payment of dues as prescribed.

Section 3. Active members shall be entitled to vote, to participate in discussion, and, under certain conditions, to hold office.

Section 4. Honorary members shall be entitled to all the privileges of active members, with the exception of voting and holding office, and shall be exempt from the payment of dues.

A person may be elected to honorary membership by vote of the Society on nomination by the Board of Directors.

Section 5. The names of the active and honorary members shall be printed in the Yearbook.

Section 6. The annual dues for active members shall be \$2.50. The election fee for active members shall be \$1.00.

ARTICLE IV

Officers. Section 1. The Officers of the Society shall be a Board of Directors, a Council, and a Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall consist of six members of the Society and the Secretary-Treasurer. Only active members who have contributed to the Yearbooks shall be eligible to serve as directors, and no member who, under the provisions of Section 3, has been elected for two full terms in immediate succession shall be eligible to re-election to succeed himself for a third term.

Section 3. The Board of Directors shall be elected by the Society to serve for three years, beginning on March first after their election. Two members of the Board shall be elected annually (and such additional members as may be necessary to fill vacancies that may have arisen).

This election shall be conducted by annual mail ballot of all active members of the Society. A primary ballot shall be secured in October, in which the active members shall nominate from a list of members eligible to said Board. The names of the six persons receiving the highest number of votes on this primary ballot shall be submitted in November for a second ballot for the election of the two members of the Board. The two persons (or more in the case of special vacancies) then receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

Section 4. The Board of Directors shall have general charge of the work of the Society, shall appoint its own Chairman, shall appoint the Secretary-Treasurer, and the members of the Council. It shall have power to fill vacancies within its membership, until a successor shall be elected as prescribed in Section 3.

Section 5. The Council shall consist of the Board of Directors, the chairmen of the Society's yearbook and research committees, and such other active members of the Society as the Board of Directors may appoint from time to time.

Section 6. The function of the Council shall be to further the objects of the Society by assisting the Board of Directors in planning and carrying forward the educational undertakings of the Society.

ARTICLE V

Publications. The Society shall publish the yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education and such supplements as the Board of Directors may provide for.

ARTICLE VI

Meetings. The Society shall hold its annual meetings at the time and place of the American Association of School Administrators of the National Education Association. Other meetings may be held when authorized by the Society or by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII

Amendments. Proposals to amend this Constitution may be made by the Board of Directors or by petition of twenty-five or more active members of the Society. Such proposals shall be submitted to all active members for a mail vote and shall be declared adopted if approved by two-thirds of the members voting thereon.

In conformity with governmental regulations pertaining to the use of essential materials, some changes have been made in the format of the yearbook and the customary reports on the affairs of the Society have been omitted this year.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION

(This list includes all persons enrolled December 31, 1943, whether for
1943 or 1944)

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INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION

1. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of the National Society is to promote the investigation and discussion of educational questions. To this end it holds an annual meeting and publishes a series of yearbooks.

2. **ELIGIBILITY TO MEMBERSHIP.** Any person who is interested in receiving its publications may become a member by sending to the Secretary-Treasurer information concerning name, title, and address, and a check for \$3.50 (see Item 5).

Membership is not transferable; it is limited to individuals, and may not be held by libraries, schools, or other institutions, either directly or indirectly.

3. **PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP.** Applicants for membership may not date their entrance back of the current calendar year, and all memberships terminate automatically on December 31, unless the dues for the ensuing year are paid as indicated in Item 6.

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School warrants and vouchers from institutions must be accompanied by definite information concerning the name and address of the person for whom membership fee is being paid. Statements of dues are rendered on our own form only. The Secretary's office cannot undertake to fill out special invoice forms of any sort or to affix notary's affidavit to statements or receipts.

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8. **COMMERCIAL SALES.** The distribution of all yearbooks prior to the current year, and also of those of the current year not regularly mailed to members in exchange for their dues, is in the hands of the distributor, not of the Secretary. For such commercial sales, communicate directly with the Department of Education, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, which will gladly send a price list covering all the publications of this Society and of its predecessor, the National Herbart Society. This list is also printed in the yearbook.

9. **YEARBOOKS.** The yearbooks are issued about one month before the February meeting. They comprise from 600 to 800 pages annually. Unusual effort has been made to make them, on the one hand, of immediate practical value, and, on the other hand, representative of sound scholarship and scientific investigation. Many of them are the fruit of co-operative work by committees of the Society.

10. **MEETINGS.** The annual meeting, at which the yearbooks are discussed is held in February at the same time and place as the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators.

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